FULNESS OF JOY

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FULNESS OF JOY.

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IN

TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WILL OF GOD.

WITH A PREFACE

BY THE

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Incumbent of Eaton Chapel.

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PREFACE

I HAVE been constrained by the writer of these pages to say a word of introduction to the reader. The book, however, will best speak for itself, and will amply repay careful study.

The subject is obviously all-important, and to any thoughtful minds all-attractive. The treatment is clear, comprehensive, and impartial. The order is Scriptural, logical, natural. In fact, there is here presented to the reader, in a small compass, an exhaustive and systematic summary of this most wonderful theme. We all know that up and down the Holy Scriptures are scattered great masses of truth with regard to the Will of God; these are here gathered together by a skilled labourer with unsparing pains, and built

up into one connected and mighty edifice, with its vestibule, temple, and shrine.

Here we have a vessel just returned from the gold diggings laden with precious ore. Of course it is true that many had been there before, and had taken away many a noble nugget, but perhaps never before had any one made so careful and complete a survey of the whole of this vast goldfield, from the coast-line where the life-ships pass by continually up to the great central heart hidden away in the mountain heights of the Divine Nature itself, the whole being mapped out into convenient districts, so that you may at once visit any particular locality without delay, while at every turn we come upon endless specimens of the precious metal in all its varieties, displayed in Divine order and native richness. I am persuaded that none can rise from a perusal of these pages without feeling awed and humbled at the majesty of God's mercy, as here revealed in His sovereign Will, nor without feeling strengthened and purified by the tonic breezes that blow freshly off such vast tracts of truth's

virgin soul, as the Word of God is here unfolded before us like a living landscape. May we all know more and more of the lovableness of God's Will, and daily find out more of its sweetness, and may we habitually go to meet it in the same spirit as the fathers of old did the promises, when "having seen them afar off, they were persuaded of them, and embraced them." And like them, though "they might have had opportunity to have returned," may we abide joyfully in His Will, and never seek to return to our own.

CHARLES A. FOX.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

PREFACE v

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER, WITH SOME ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE SUBJECT THEREIN TREATED 3

SCRIPTURES ON THE WILL OF GOD FROM OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS 27

PART I.—GOD THE FATHER.

THE CHARACTER OF GOD'S WILL, BOTH INHERENT, AND AS DISPLAYED TO MAN . 43

PART II.—GOD THE SON.

CHAPTER I.

HOW CHRIST, BEING POSSESSED OF ALL THE REQUISITES FOR FULFILLING THE WILL OF GOD, DID BECOME ITS PERFECT EXPONENT . 49

SHORT DIGRESSION ON THE HERALD ANGELS . 62

CHAPTER II.

PAGE

HOW HE DID SO BY REVEALING HIS FATHER AS A GOD OF LOVE TO A WORLD LYING IN DARKNESS 68

CHAPTER III.

HOW HE DID SO, FURTHER, BY A THREEFOLD FULFILLING OF THE LAW, THE PROPHETS, AND THE SACRIFICIAL TYPES . . . 75

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRAYER WHICH CHRIST TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES CONCERNING THE WILL OF GOD, AND THE THREE PROMISES HE GAVE TO THE DOERS THEREOF 93

CHAPTER V.

THE THREE OCCASIONS ON WHICH CHRIST GAVE EXPRESSION TO HIS OWN WILL 97

PART III.—GOD THE HOLY GHOST.

THE WILL OF GOD KNOWN TO THE HOLY GHOST IN HIS INTERCESSIONS FOR MEN . . 103

PART IV.—MAN.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

GOD'S PURPOSE THAT MAN SHOULD BECOME POSSESSED OF ALL THE REQUISITES FOR FULFILLING THIS WILL. ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTES FROM THE LIFE OF HAYDN AND MISS HAVERGAL 109

CHAPTER II.

THE THREE COMMANDS WITH PROMISES ATTACHED, AND OTHER WAY-MARKS WHICH WILL GUIDE INTO THE DESIRED OBEDIENCE, ONENESS, AND KNOWLEDGE 120

CHAPTER II. (*Continued.*) . . 133

THREEFOLD SCRIPTURES 143

OF THE SEVEN EXCEEDING GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES TO THE DOERS OF GOD'S WILL . 149

ST. PAUL A FULFILLER OF THE WILL OF GOD . 163

PART V.

IN DARK CONTRAST, UNREGENERATE MAN WORKING OUT HIS OWN WILL 183

APPENDIX 193

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT THE WILL OF THE LORD IS.

THOU sweet belovèd Will of God,
My anchor ground, my fortress hill
The Spirit's silent fair abode,
In Thee I hide me and am still.

O Will, that willest good alone,
Lead Thou the way, Thou guidest best;
A silent child I follow on,
And trusting, lean upon Thy breast.

God's Will doth make the bitter sweet,
And all is good when it is done;
Unless God's Will do hallow it,
The glory of all joy is gone.

Ill that God blesses is our good,
And unblest good is ill;
And all is right that seems most wrong
If it be His sweet Will.

TERSTEEGEN.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT THE WILL OF THE LORD IS.

THE following pages, with the verses relating to the WILL OF GOD, were first compiled for private study, but so precious were the treasures brought forth from the rich mine of God's word, that it was counselled to let others share therein, as the arrangement might perhaps prove helpful to those who have not the needful leisure to work out subjects fully for themselves.

By thus gathering into one focus all the verses directly relating to the Will of God, wondrous light is thrown upon it, its nature and its requirements ; and above all upon the perfect exposition of it given by the Lord Jesus in His life upon earth, also upon the manner in which the hearts of God's children are moulded by that Will into oneness with Him, and made ready for the mysteries of its love to be revealed to them.

Most earnestly do we pray that the thoughts

expressed may be, though a very faint, yet a true reflection of the Divine mind, and not one word written which is not given by the Holy Spirit, the promised *gift of the Father*, to guide into all truth. The pen is very feeble, though the subject very grand, but its very feebleness will redound to His glory if He vouchsafe to use it! Thou lovest to give liberally, our Father; it is the good pleasure of Thy Will! And Thou lovest to receive back Thy gifts; unto Thee in humble adoring gratitude therefore do we offer unto Thee Thine own teaching. Transmit through us a ray of Thy light, and Thou shalt be glorified!

The Divinity of what we may call the *initial sentence* of our subject, GOOD WILL TO MAN, is utterly beyond man's conception! Too marvellous in its condescension, too marvellous in its love! It is a matter of intense importance therefore, and one in which the honour of the Master is concerned, that very clear and distinct statements shall be made concerning it; besides, too, that its true nature is so constantly darkened by Satan's devices, and by man's "Willing ignorance" of its nature.

The revelations of God's Will to man have been manifold, from the early days of creation, but the only expression of it here entered on is

that when the word itself or its cognates are used in Scripture.

Where *known and obeyed* the aspect of that part of this sin-stricken world is completely altered. Instead of a downward tendency, an upward one is ever markedly present; peace and civilization are its needful attendants, life becomes valued, humane laws are made, love and kindness are developed; for this glorious Will is bent on elevating man, yea more, on lifting him out of his natural corruption, and transmuting his Will into oneness with the Divine.

Surely to make this Will better known and understood is work such as angels would rejoice in!

It is from the mountain that we behold the expanse, stretch after stretch of glorious country unfolding to our view, ever more as we climb higher. And from what spiritual elevation can we so well understand the glory of the Lord, and the breadth, depth, length, and height of the Divine love of Christ, as from thence where we would fain enter into now, that of the knowledge of the Will of God?

There is a joy in harmony. The harmony of nature delights the mind, the harmony of music

the ear. The highest harmony of all must be the harmony with that which is essentially perfect; and it is into this which our Lord would bring us, even into harmony with "the most beautiful thing in heaven or in earth,"—His own most perfect Will. The very thought exalts the soul!

But little exposition is needed beyond the arrangement of the Divine word itself, in the following pages, so as best to show under the different heads the golden linkings of the golden chain of that Will, which was put forth for man's welfare and salvation, from before the creation of the world, and which is engaged now ceaselessly in carrying out and completing its projects of love toward him, and in mighty conflict against the powers of evil!

That Will which, while a Will of love most marvellous and infinite in tenderness, is yet a Will of strength and power, resistless in its workings!

Severe and terrible only against sin!

That Will which in the appointed time will triumphantly reign, thereby abolishing evil, and establishing holiness to the Lord throughout His universe!

Oh, if it were a weak Will! Oh, if it were an unstable Will! What would become of man?

But glory to His name, *its strength is Omnipotence,* and its character changeth never!

That God's Will should be a Will of love is a truth that the natural man cannot understand. Because fallen, and from the very sense of sin, he looks for judgment, (a fact shown throughout the world by all the heathen and other false systems of worship,) and these fears, worked on by Satan, have shut the heart to Divine love, and often bid it despair.

But, strange to say, there are many Christians who have accepted the Divine love in its greatest of all manifestations, that of the Atonement, who yet believe that God's Will is stern and afflictive as though separate from atoning love, and who talk of submission to it in sorrowful tones, almost as a heathen would speak of his vengeful deities; and this though told of Him whom they consider as a hard Master that "He doth *not* Willingly afflict, nor grieve the children of men." And there Satan would keep them *outside* of all the love in that Will, viewing only its massive portals, magnificent in strength and Omnipotence!

And yet there is a little wicket gate with latch so light, a tiny child may raise it! Let us go through it now with David's prayer on our lips:

"Teach me to do Thy Will, for Thou art my God; Thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness," and we shall find as we enter in that we have indeed a prospect, in this "land of uprightness," of one of the fairest portions of the garden of the Lord, and that "Good Will to man" is the fragrant breathing of every blossom there!

But if, instead of obeying the command "*to understand* what the Will of the Lord is," we remain shrinking outside, how can we but continue in ignorance of its nature?

If all dear trembling ones could be led to study their Bibles on the subject, how they would fling away their fears, and with eyes tear-bedimmed for past hard judging of such a Master, begin to re-echo the Divinely taught prayer "Thy Will be done" with very different accents to their former wont, and say with praising heart, "I was afraid, but now I know Thy Will, I love it"! Instead of being against them, they would find the blessed Three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are all *one in Will* for man's salvation and happiness, and in the patient encompassing care needful to protect them and to draw their heart out of self into oneness with God; and that flowing from redemption, which is called "the mystery of His

Will," every other blessing is open to us, yea, the whole treasure house of God!

Not until we can say with full assurance of faith, "*Undertake Thou for me,*" in all the comprehensiveness of that comprehensive prayer, can we know the full blessedness of resting in that Will. I remember with deep shame expressing years since to a dear friend, long taught in the school of Christ, my feeling as to the spiritual heights to which a Christian must attain, before being able to utter such a prayer. My friend looked at me in silent astonishment! Often have I thought of that look, since my eyes have been opened to see how simple and childlike a faith it requires, to understand the rest of being permitted to put all into my dear Lord's hands.

> "Just to let thy Father do
> What He Will,
> Just to know that He is true
> And be still!"

"*Just to trust* Him, that is ALL"; no opposition, no restlessness, no more again chilling thoughts of Him, or intermingling of the human Will with the Divine; *just to walk* hand in hand with Him, with the simple confidence reposed in a beloved earthly parent, and the very doing so must melt

our Will into oneness with His. Thus would there be no marring of the perfect peace which He would give us; give us not only in days of sunshine, but give when that Will *needfully*, "*not Willingly*," should grieve us.

"All *His* ways are pleasantness, and all *His* paths are peace."

> "In vain by reason and by rule
> We try to bend the Will,
> For only in the Saviour's school
> Is learnt the heavenly skill!"

Not that this can be all understood at first. The training of the soul is a lifelong work, and it is during this training that there is a gradual unfolding, as our need is, and as our eyes are opened with desire to understand. Certain grand principles of the Divine Will are of course revealed to us at once in conversion, when we become enrolled in the family of God. But this "land of uprightness" needs that light should be shed upon its pilgrim paths by revelations of the Holy Spirit, continually given throughout the whole period of the earthly life.

And this gradual unfolding is not only because of our incapacity to understand at once the advancing revelations of God's Will but also out

of tender love, because "He knoweth whereof we are made, He remembereth that we are dust," and He would not have us weighted with cares of future days. Only the beloved Son of God Himself, saw all the way that He should traverse during the thirty-three years of His life on earth, mapped out for Him from the beginning to the end!

There are mysteries in the action of God's Will; intense mysteries, often dark ones. Mysteries which finite minds cannot understand; how can they? Mysteries where evil is apparently permitted to triumph, and good to be overthrown. Mysteries in bereavement, in conversions delayed, in countless sorrows sent. Mysteries which sometimes make the stoutest heart to quail and bleed, even while desiring to bow in humble submission, and satisfied certainty of the wisdom and love, that orders or permits.

But though for a while not even a glint of light may penetrate through the darkness, to those who trust in the Lord light will yet arise, and there are precious promises given which are as a sheet anchor for the crushed soul, on which it may hang with illimitable trust; amongst them none more precious than these: "*I will never*

leave thee nor forsake thee"; "*All things shall work together for good*"; and, "*What thou knowest not now thou shalt know hereafter*"!

"God is His own Interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

Not now, but in glory, when the work of training is completed, and the refined and purified saint "*shall know even as he is known.*" Then it will be seen clear as the light how love overshadowed the darkest dispensation, and that every action of His Will which it is now working out in detail throughout the universe, was but an integral part of the mighty plan, which will then be perfected.

However fierce the fire or dark the cloud, no saint is left alone to endure, for the Lord Jesus —He who knew the darkest aspect of the Father's Will when He trod the winepress alone, and justice demanded from Him, the sinner's Substitute, its due to the uttermost—is always near to strengthen and sustain, enabling the trusting one to say with David: "I will fear no evil, for *Thou* art with me."

What immense injury we do to ourselves, besides showing dishonour to God, *when we draw*

back, as it were, from the moulding hand of Divine love! Thanks to the depths of that love, so patient and longsuffering, He will perform His work in us even to the end! But the willing and obedient child, whose heart recognizes and rejoices in the Father's hand, must have a happier time of training than the unwilling and trustless one; as well as by-and-by a more abundant entrance into glory. "If ye be *willing and obedient,* ye shall eat the good of the land," is a promise for the life that now is as well as for the life to come.

When God sends trial, opposition to His Will can only make it harder to bear, and can never remove it. As quaintly expressed by a certain writer: "It is as though there were two pieces of wood lying before us, the long piece representing God's Will, and the short piece our Will. Lay these side by side, and there is no cross; but *put the short piece athwart the long, and there is a cross directly.*"

The writers of some beautiful hymns on resignation, in some cases have unwittingly helped to strengthen such shrinking from God's Will, because dwelling only on one phase of it—that of *chastening love,* repeating the words our Saviour

uttered in anguish in Gethsemane, "Thy Will be done," in such manner as to convey the thought that only sorrow and submission were connected with that Will here below. How refreshing, on the contrary, are such stanzas as the following, by the beloved F. R. H., whose perfect trust wells out in songs of praise as must ever cheer on and encourage the militant Church of Christ!

"Hush! oh, hush! for the Father portioneth as He will
To all His beloved children, and shall they not be still?
Is not His Will the wisest? is not His choice the best?
And in perfect acquiescence is there not perfect rest?

"Hush! oh, hush! for the Father, whose ways are true and just,
Knoweth and careth and loveth, and waits for thy perfect trust;
The cup He is slowly filling shall soon be full to the brim,
And infinite compensations for ever be found in Him."

Thus far we have been mainly viewing the Christian's duty in reference toward the Will of God in the light of loving submission, but there is another and higher aspect of it which should be the experience of all, and which is revealed to us as possible, by the Lord Jesus Himself, for did not He teach His disciples to pray: "*Let Thy Will be done*"?

The force of this petition is understood where the transforming power of God's grace has gradu-

ally lifted a soul into such complacency with His Will, that there *can be no longer the bowing down* to it, but instead *the willing rising up into it*, right out of self and above self, to be wholly one with Him. For our God would not have our Will broken and crushed, but *blended with His own;* and the grateful loving obedience which is the result of this blending is acceptable to Him; it is Christlike, and is the fulfilling in us of the petition: "*Let Thy Will be done in earth as in heaven.*"

When we are thus identified with God's Will, a sweet life begins for us on earth. Blessed indeed it is to have Jesus as our Saviour and High-priest, but best of all to have Him what He becomes then, *our Lord and our King*, so reigning absolutely in our hearts, "in the throne chamber of the Will," that we can say with Paul: "*Not I, but Christ.*"

Unless He reign in us thus absolutely here below, how can we expect above, to be in the throng of saints who press nearest around the throne of Jesus? For surely the nearest place must be reserved for those who, followers of His example, have, by understanding and carrying out His Will, been living expositors of Him, though

imperfectly, even as He was of His Father perfectly!

It may be helpful and encouraging to some amongst us if we give here a few illustrations from the lives of tried Christians to show how great are the possibilities of this oneness with God's Will to those who are wholly yielded to Him.

Dr. Moon, the well-known blind philanthropist, writes, in kind response to the request for his personal testimony on this subject:—

"My testimony in reference to the goodness and perfection of the Will of God, and His dealings towards us as His children, is that He is infinite in both. There are many things that are mysterious to us at first, but time and circumstances alike prove that all is ordered aright and in love. He is ever too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. In reviewing all the way by which He has led me, and His gracious and loving dealings with me during my forty-four years of blindness, I must exclaim with the poet, 'I am lost in wonder, love, and praise.'

"It was at the close of my twenty-first year that He took my sight and gave me a new heart, *and blindness as a talent, to use for His glory.*

How different were the qualifications that He gave me, to fit me for the work that He had called me to do, from those that would be considered necessary by man. Light, above all things, would have been thought needful; but my Heavenly Father saw otherwise. Through my blindness I learnt to know what were the wants and deprivations of my fellow-blind, a lesson I could never have so thoroughly known had I not been blind myself. This blindness also served as a fetter to bind me to the work; and the new heart which was given me, made me submissive to His Will, and use the talent He had given me for His glory.

"Our losses are frequently called afflictions, but are they not rather mercies in disguise? And can we not, when they are sanctified to us, write upon them, 'God is love'? On my blindness would I ever have this inscribed, and through eternity my song of praise shall be, '*He hath done all things well.*'

"When I think of the honoured instrument He has made me, enabling me to put portions of the Word of life into two hundred and fifty-one languages and dialects, and when thousands of the blind have borne the testimony, that these precious truths have been made a blessing and salvation

to their souls, I feel that it would more than compensate for a thousand eyes had I them to give.

"What patience, what forbearance our Heavenly Father manifests towards us when we murmur against His Will! How lovingly and graciously He moulds our stubborn Will to His. His watchful eye and guardian care is ever over and around us. The gracious Shepherd, when we stray in murmuring paths, lovingly brings us back, and restores our peace. In trials sent to purify us, the fire is not allowed to kindle upon us, nor the floods to overflow."

Similar to this has been the blessed experience of Miss Fanny Crosby, alike deprived of the inestimable gift of sight, but enabled to be a teacher of many through her sanctified gift of song. This beautiful word was sent of her to Miss Havergal in answer to her inquiry, "Who is the author of 'Safe in the arms of Jesus'?"—"She is a blind lady *whose heart can see splendidly in the sunshine of God's love.*"

Concerning *pain* Miss Havergal writes:—

"I think that, during certain stages of Christian life and experience, *pain* is always a mystery and so long it is a grand trial of God's perfect wisdom and love and righteousness. 'His work

is perfect' (Deut. xxxii. 4). To myself the whole thing is clear as sunshine, but tenfold clearer since the intense pain through which He has led me of late. I would not have foregone that teaching for anything! Pain, as to outsiders, is no mystery when looked at in the light of God's holiness, and in the light of Calvary. . As to God's own children, it is truly and really only blessing in disguise. It is but His chiselling, one of His graving tools, producing the likeness to Jesus for which we long."

Another striking illustration we append is in a case of *sudden bereavement.*

A favourite and promising son, the pride and joy of his parents' hearts, and a decided Christian, when just about to enter upon university life, was suddenly stricken with some infectious disorder. So virulent was the malady that the young man himself never expected to recover, and was not surprised when the physicians told him that they could do nothing more. His parents heard this as they stood by the bedside of this beloved son, and were for a time utterly overwhelmed. They feared at first to look at one another, lest the grief of the one should increase the grief of the other. But at length the father,

taught of the Lord, was enabled to resign his Will, and then looking towards the mother with holy courage on his countenance, just said, "*Yes, Lord.*" The mother caught the look of his eye, and calmly re-echoed the words of submission; and the dying son, who had been sorrowing on his parents' account, hearing their words, was comforted, and also repeated, "*Yes, Lord,*" adding words of praise and thanksgiving. No sound of complaining, no murmur was heard in that sick-room; and in this blessed frame of mind the watchers remained, and the beloved son, until, not many hours after, he was safe for ever with the Lord!

In connection with an important matter concerning God's work and deeply felt by her (the appointment of a successor to her husband's great institution at Dusseldorf), the Countess Matilda von der Recke writes: "God will order it according to His Will. He leads His own safely—often wonderfully—but yet gloriously, if, *without a Will of their own*, they wait for God's Will, and submit themselves unconditionally to Him. Only when we know decidedly, 'This is the Will of God,' have we peace and happiness."

Monsieur Armand de Lille, the well-known pastor at Paris, writes on a similar subject: "I

discern the ways of God, and I bless Him that the manifestations of His Will are but the spreading forth of His love and faithfulness."

The Christian poet Cowper, who suffered from the peculiarly heavy trial of ofttimes intense *mental depression,* concludes one of his poems with lines which tell how he too had learnt to rejoice in God's Will:—

"But, O Thou bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all Thy gifts Thyself the crown;
Give what Thou canst, without Thee we are poor,
And with Thee rich, *take what Thou wilt away.*"

Such blessed testimonies of the people of God might be multiplied indefinitely, praise be to His name! for there are not a few who are seeking to obey the command: "Understanding *what* the Will of the Lord is."

"Thy Father reigns supreme above:
The glory of His name
Is, Grace and Wisdom, Truth and Love,
His Will must be the same.
And thou hast asked all joys in one,
In whispering forth, '*Thy Will be done.*'

"His Will—each soul to sanctify
Redeeming might has won;
His Will—that thou shouldst never die,
Believing on His Son;
His Will—that thou through earthly strife
Shouldst rise to everlasting life.

"That one unchanging song of praise
Should from our hearts arise;
That we should know His wondrous ways,
Though hidden from the wise;
That we, so sinful and so base,
Should know the glory of His grace.

"His Will—to grant the yearning prayer
For dear ones far away,
That they His grace and love may share,
And tread His pleasant way;
That in the Father and the Son
All perfect we may be in one.

"His Will—the little flock to bring
Into His royal fold,
To reign for ever with their King,
His beauty to behold,
Sin's fell dominion crushed for aye,
Sorrow and sighing fled away.

"This thou hast asked! And shall the prayer
Float upward on a sigh?
No song were sweet enough to bear
Such glad desires on high!
But God thy Father shall fulfil,
In thee and for thee, all His Will."

F. R. H.

One great step towards the possibility of this blessed identification with God's Will, must be the making ourselves acquainted with it in every possible particular; bringing together, as already said, into one focus, all that is revealed to us directly about it in Scripture. As we do this,

we shall find that passing all man's understanding is it, in its depth and entirety of love toward our favoured race!

There are *five** direct expressions concerning it only in the Old Testament, while there are about *fifty* in the New. This fact is one of the *silent teachings* of Scripture, a sort of commentary on man's impotence to understand God's Will until His Divine Son had come to reveal it in His own life on earth,—the living Interpreter of its nature, its requirements, and objects.

To these Scriptures now we turn, and then we will seek to examine them under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, whose office as *Teacher* we earnestly and humbly implore.

* Exclusive of the repetitions in Dan. iv. 25, 32, 35; and v. 21.

SCRIPTURES ON THE WILL OF GOD

"Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!"—Ps. cxiii. 5, 6.

PART I

DECLARATIONS OF SCRIPTURE ON THE WILL OF GOD.

1.—What is the Inherent Character of the Will of God?

ABSOLUTE AND OMNIPOTENT.

NONE CAN WITHSTAND IT.

Dan. iv. 17.—"The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He Will."

Dan. iv. 35.—"He doeth according to His Will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth."

Rom. ix. 19.—"For who hath resisted His Will?"

Rom. ix. 18.—"He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He Will He hardeneth."

Eph. i. 11.—"Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own Will."

2.—What the Will of God is toward man.

Luke ii. 14.—A "good Will towards men."

Which predestinates.

Eph. i. 11.—"Predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own Will."

Begets through the Word.

Jas. i. 18.—"Of His own Will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures."

Quickens.

John i. 13.—"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the Will of the flesh, nor of the Will of man, but of God."

Saves.

2 Pet. iii. 9.—The Lord is . . . longsuffering to usward, not Willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Adopts as children.

Eph. i. 5.—"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His Will."

Delivers.

Gal. i. 4.—"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the Will of God."

Sanctifies.

1 Thess. iv. 3.—"For this is the Will of God, even your sanctification."

Heb. x. 10.—"By the which Will we are sanctified."

Bestows gifts.

1 Cor. xii. 11.—"He divideth to every man severally as He Will."

Heb. ii. 4.—"God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own Will."

Reveals the mystery of His Will.

Eph. i. 9.—"Having made known unto us the mystery of His Will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself."

Promises life in resurrection.

John vi. 39.—"This is the Father's Will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

And life everlasting.

John vi. 40.—"And this is the Will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

3.—What God doth not will.

Matt. xviii. 14.—"It is not the Will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

Lam. iii. 33.—"He doth not afflict Willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

PART II.

THE WILL OF CHRIST ONE WITH THE WILL OF GOD.

1.—The Will of God was accomplished by Christ.

Delighted in.

Ps. xl. 8.—"I delight to do Thy Will, O My God! Yea, Thy law is within My heart."

Came to fulfil.

Heb. x. 9.—"Lo, I come . . . to do Thy Will, O God."

John vi. 38.—"For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me."

John v. 30.—"I seek not Mine own Will, but the Will of the Father which has sent Me."

John iv. 34.—"My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."

Prayed for, and submitted to.

Luke xxii. 42.—"Father, if Thou be Willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless not My Will, but Thine be done."

Matt. xxvi. 39.—"O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I Will, but as Thou Wilt."

Mark xiv. 36.—"Abba, Father; all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me; nevertheless not what I Will, but what Thou Wilt."

Matt. xxvi. 42.—"O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me except I drink it, Thy Will be done."

2.—CHRIST BEARS DIRECT TESTIMONY TO THE NATURE OF HIS FATHER'S WILL.

John vi. 39.—"This is the Father's Will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

John vi. 40.—"This is the Will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life."

3.—CHRIST'S OWN WILL RARELY EXPREST, BUT WHEN EXPREST, TYPICAL OF, OR INCLUSIVE OF, ALL HIS WORK FOR MAN.

In healing the body.

Matt. viii. 3.—"And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I WILL; be thou clean; and immediately his leprosy was cleansed."

In quickening the soul.

John v. 21.—"For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom HE WILL."

With regard to the Saints' oneness with Him in glory.

John xvii. 24.—"Father, I WILL that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me." *

4.—CHRIST TEACHES HIS DISCIPLES A PRAYER CONCERNING HIS FATHER'S WILL.

Matt. vi. 10.—"And when ye pray say, . . . Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

* This utterance is the only one in which Christ expressed His Will to the Father, and is a fitting sequel to the life of perfect obedience and conformity to the Father's Will which He had then well nigh accomplished.

5.—He gives promises to those who fulfil it.

Mark iii. 35.—"For whosoever shall do the Will of God, the same is My brother, and My sister, and mother."

John vii. 17.—"If any man will do His Will, he shall know of the doctrine."

Matt. vii. 21.—"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the Will of My Father."

PART III.

INTERCESSION OF THE HOLY GHOST ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD.

Rom. viii. 26.—"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints *according to the Will of God*."

Result of such intercession—prayer answered.

1 John v. 14, 15.—"If we ask anything *accord-*

ing to His Will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him."

PART IV.

THE WILL OF GOD WROUGHT IN MAN, DESIRED AND DONE BY MAN, MADE KNOWN TO MAN.

I.—THE WILL OF GOD WROUGHT IN MAN.

Phil. ii. 13.—"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to Will and to do of His good pleasure."

Rom. xii. 2.—"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect Will of God."

1 Pet. iv. 19.—"Let them that suffer according to the Will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

Ps. cx. 3.—"Thy people shall be Willing in the day of Thy power."

Prov. xxi. 1.—"The king's heart is in the

hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; He turneth it whithersoever He Will."

2.—THE WILL OF GOD DESIRED AND DONE BY MAN.

Eph. vi. 6, 7.—"As the servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the heart. With Good Will doing service as to the Lord."

1 Pet. ii. 15.—"So is the Will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

Jas. iv. 15.—"Say, if the Lord Will, we shall live and do this or that."

2 Cor. viii. 3, 11, 12.—"They were Willing beyond their power. There was a readiness to will. For if there be first a Willing mind, it is accepted."

1 Pet. iv. 2.—"He should no longer live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the Will of God."

1 Thess. v. 18.—"In everything give thanks, for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

Ezra vii. 18.—"Whatsoever shall seem good to thee and thy brethren, . . . that do after the Will of your God."

1 Chron. xxviii. 9.—"Know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve Him with a Willing mind.'

The Will of God made known to man.

Eph. i. 9.—"Having made known unto us the mystery of His Will according to His good pleasure."

Eph. v. 17.—"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the Will of the Lord is."

3.—Individual actings of the Will of God.

1 Cor. i. 1.—"Paul, . . . an apostle by the Will of God."

Acts xxii. 14.—"The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldest know His Will."

Rom. xv. 32.—"I . . . come unto you with joy by the Will of God."

Acts xiii. 22.—"I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, which shall fulfil all My Will."

Acts xiii. 36.—"For David, after he had served his own generation by the Will of God, fell on sleep."

2 Cor. viii. 5.—The churches of Macedonia "first gave their own selves to the Lord and unto us by the Will of God."

4.—Prayers concerning the Will of God.

Ps. cxliii. 10.—"Teach me to do Thy Will,

for Thou art my God. Thy Spirit is good ; lead me into the land of uprightness."

Acts ix. 6.—"And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what Wilt Thou have me to do ?"

Col. i. 9.—"We . . . do not cease to pray for you that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His Will."

Col. iv. 12.—"Labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the Will of God."

Heb. xiii. 21.—"The God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do His Will."

5.—An invitation to the Willing.

Rev. xxii. 17.—"Whosoever Will, let him take the water of life freely."

6.—Promises to the doers of the Will of God.

John ix. 31.—"If any man be a worshipper of God and doeth His Will, him He heareth."

1 John v. 14, 15.—"This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His Will, He heareth us. And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him."

Isa. i. 19.—"If ye be Willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."

Mark iii. 35.—"Whosoever shall do the Will of God, the same is My brother, and My sister, and mother."

John vii. 17.—"If any man will do His Will, he shall know of the doctrine."

Matt. vii. 21.—"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the Will of My Father which is in heaven."

1 John ii. 17.—"He that doeth the Will of God abideth for ever."

PART V.

IN DARK CONTRAST THE NATURAL AND UNREGENERATE WILL OF MAN.

1.—What that Will is.

1 Pet. iv. 3.—"The Will of the Gentiles, . . . lusts, revellings, abominable idolatries."

Eph. ii. 3.—"You . . . who were dead in trespasses and sins . . . walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, . . .

fulfilling the Wills of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath."

2.—What that Will led to.

John v. 40.—"Jesus said, Ye will not come unto Me, that ye may have life."

Matt. xxvii. 17, 21.—"Pilate asked, Whom Will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas."

Luke xxiii. 23, 25.—"And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified, . . . but he delivered Jesus to their Will."*

3.—Whose Will led their Will.

2 Tim. ii. 26.—Ensnared by "the devil, . . . taken captive by him at his Will."

4.—Willing ignorance of God.

2 Pet. iii. 5.—"For this they Willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old."

* Thus this Will of man, allowed of God to take its course, culminated in the awful wickedness of first rejecting and then putting to death His holy Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.—JUDGMENT ON THOSE WHO KNOW AND DISOBEY THE WILL OF GOD.

Luke xii. 47.—"That servant which knew his Lord's Will and prepared not, neither did according to His Will, shall be beaten with many stripes."

PART I.

GOD THE FATHER.

"Fury is not in Me. Who would set the briers and thorns against Me n battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me, and he shall make peace with Me."

PART I.

ON THE SCRIPTURAL DECLARATIONS OF THE WILL OF GOD.

THE verses brought together under this heading relate to—

I.—THE INHERENT CHARACTER OF THE WILL OF GOD.

II.—THE PURPOSE OF THAT WILL TOWARD MAN.

I.—Very few passages contain a direct definition of the Divine Will, God's acts in creation, and His whole dealings with man, as portrayed in Scripture, being an exposition of it. There are four passages in St. Paul's Epistles belonging to this heading, bu tthe grandest description of it, most remarkably, comes from the lips of the great king of Babylon, after his repentance and restoration to power: "*He doth according to His Will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.*" Eight years before, this truth had first been spoken to him by a Holy One, and

again by Daniel; but until he had learnt it, his kingdom was taken from him.

The solemn words of the inspired Paul which are on a previous page (Rom. ix. 18) ever call forth objections from the unconverted man. But for God's taught and trusting children His Will is sufficient; and they can look on with reverent faith to the time when this mystery shall be unrolled among many other mysteries, for all things shall be revealed, and God justified in the eyes of the whole universe, not only as holy and just, and true, but as ever also and unchangeably, the God whose very essence is LOVE.

"Reigning, guiding, all-commanding, ruling myriad worlds of light,
Now exalting, now abasing, none can stay Thy hand of might!
Working all things by Thy power, by the counsel of Thy Will,
Thou art God! enough to know it, and to hear Thy word 'Be still'!"

F. R. H.

II.—*The purpose of that Will toward man.*

In the next series of verses we find the character of the Will of God in relation to man portrayed by the initial sentence: "GOOD WILL TO MAN,"—the message given by the angel on that night of nights when "the good pleasure of His Will" (first shadowed forth by the rite of sacrifice)

began to unfold itself in the birth of Jesus Emmanuel, these words *Good Will* forming a sort of nucleus for the wondrous declarations which follow, of the love in the Divine Will to man.

There are some eleven of these occurring in the New Testament. These are inclusive of all that is connected with man's deliverance from death and sin, his salvation and future glory.

In the inspired Word the Will of God —

1. Predestinates.
2. Begets through the Word of truth.
3. Quickens.
4. Saves.
5. Adopts as children.
6. Delivers.
7. Sanctifies.
8. Bestows gifts of the Holy Ghost.
9. Reveals mysteries.
10. Promises life in resurrection.
11. Promises life everlasting.

Still further light is thrown upon this aspect of the Divine Will by the two concluding negative assertions, which seem to give further glimpses into the Father's heart of yearning tenderness to man,—

"He doth not Willingly afflict."

"Not Willing that any should perish."

It is not intended in these pages to enter into the actions of God's Will in material things, nor to touch upon its glorious displayment in the earthly creation, but only to view it in its actions of grace to man and in its perfect fulfilment by Jesus Christ, to which we hasten to direct attention in the next part.

PART II.

GOD THE SON.

"Before the work of our redemption, Jesus Christ was in primeval glory. It was from the heights of celestial security and blessedness that He looked with an eye of pity on our sinful habitation—it was from a scene where beings of a holy nature surrounded Him, and the full homage of the Divinity was tendered to Him, and in the ecstacies of His fellowship with God his Father, all was peace, and purity, and excellence—it was from this that He took His voluntary departure, and went out on His errand to seek and to save us."—CHALMERS.

PART II.

CHRIST THE EXPONENT OF HIS FATHER'S WILL.

CHAPTER I.

"I delight to do Thy Will, O my God! Yea, Thy law is within My heart."

"Lo, I come . . . to do Thy Will, O God."

"For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me."

"I seek not Mine own Will, but the Will of the Father which hath sent Me."

"My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."

ON this part of our subject it will be needful to dwell a while, for it is of intense and deepest interest, to every member of the redeemed Church, to understand how perfect the harmony was that existed between the Father and the Son; how their Will was one, a Will of love towards man, bent on bringing about his salvation; how therefore Christ *could* and *did become* the perfect Exponent of this Will, as well as its perfect

Fulfiller while on earth. This perfect fulfilment through life, and unto death, being essential to this salvation.

Truly we tread here on holiest ground! May He who gives such truth to be searched into, give the spiritual insight as we search. And then, knowing more of Him, we shall of necessity become more moulded into His image, learning ourselves with joy to do the Father's Will.

A glance backward to the era of Christ's coming shows us how the world was then overshadowed with great darkness. The general revelation of God, which had been given in the days of old, and, up to later times, to the favoured land of Canaan, was quite obscured. "The world by wisdom knew not God." Ignorant of His love and holiness, they judged Him by themselves, and thought of Him as harsh and pitiless. To this ignorance of God the Lord Jesus hereafter refers as the cause of the bitter persecution He endured on earth (John xv. 21).

This darkness was to be dispelled, and the clear light to shine in the person of Jesus Christ. To the life therefore of this Divine Interpreter we must look if we would know aright the true nature of God's Will, to *His* life whose advent

was heralded long ages before by the announcement—

"Lo, I come! I delight to do Thy Will, O my God!"

For the perfect fulfilment of this Will, three conditions were requisite:—

1. Perfect knowledge of it.
2. Perfect oneness with it.
3. Perfect Willingness to be dependent on it, and obedient to it.

And in the Lord Jesus alone could these conditions be fulfilled. Because He had ever dwelt with His Father, He was necessarily *the Possessor of knowledge* the most intimate of His character, and thoughts, and ways, of knowledge such as could belong to the Son alone, because also *one with the Father.*.

For though when He came to earth He laid by His power and glory, yet was this perfect oneness never diminished. In the moral force and beauty of His character, in holiness, truth, and love, He was ever the very transcript of His Father, "the visible image of the invisible God," "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person."

On this intensity of oneness between the Father

and the Son, on this absolute identity, we shall do well to ponder for a few moments, *for this was the needful basis from which alone could flow the possibility of perfect fulfilling*, and, as a consequence, *the possibility of working out a perfect salvation for man.*

The Lord Jesus Himself most forcibly dwelt on this twofold truth of *perfect knowledge*, and *perfect oneness*, with God on various occasions, in such words as these: "I and My Father are one." "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." "If ye had known Me, ye would have known the Father also." "As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father." "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." "I know Him, for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me."

St. John, writing retrospectively of Him, says: "The Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true," because, "He hath declared Him." St. Paul—"In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

It was requisite further that the Lord Jesus should live a life of *absolute dependence on the Will of His Father*, and that His Godhead should be kept in abeyance, until His work on earth was finished. And this dependence was to begin from before His birth, and continue throughout His life, to His death and resurrection, or during the whole period that the title belonged to Him of "Servant of the Lord."

It was concerning this aspect of the work of Jesus that these marvellous words were penned by the prophet Isaiah: "Hear, ye deaf, and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Who is blind but My Servant, or deaf as My Messenger that I sent? *Who is blind as He that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's Servant?*" *

Respecting this taking the form of a servant, we ought not to omit reference more full to Isaiah's Messianic prophecies, ranging from chapters xl. to liii., where the Messiah is spoken of some ten times as *Servant of the Lord*, including the passage here quoted.

* Wesley, writing on these verses, remarks: "He had no life separate from God, no self-will. He emptied Himself of all but *love*."

On this truth He Himself dwelt continually in conversing with those around Him during the years of His ministry, as also sometimes in prophetic utterances of old.

The following quotations are among the most striking which detail this dependence :—

1. *He was dependent on His Father for an earthly body.*

"A body hast Thou prepared me."

2. *Dependent on Him in infancy.*

"My trust was in Thee when I hanged yet on my mother's breasts."

3. *Dependent as His Messenger.*

"I am from Him, and He hath sent me."

4. *Dependent for life.*

"I live by the Father."

5. *Dependent for power.*

"The Son can do nothing of Himself."

6. *Dependent on His Will.*

"I came not to do Mine own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me."

7. *Dependent for teaching.*

"I do nothing of Myself but as the Father hath taught Me."

8. *Dependent for words.*

"I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father

which hath sent Me, He gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak."

"I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him."

9. *Dependent in His work.*

"The works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same I do." "The Father which dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works."

10. *Dependent for doctrine.*

"My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me."

11. *Obedient unto suffering.*

"Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.' "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him."

12. *Obedient unto death.*

"Father, *if* it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not My Will, but Thine be done."

And this dependence was to Him a satisfying joy. We remember how on one occasion He expressed this to His disciples, as they urged Him to take the needful food they had brought Him from Samaria.

"I have meat to eat that ye know not of," was His answer. "*My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work.*"

Wondrous truth! thus

VERY GOD, WHILE VERY MAN!

While the Son thus never ceased to trust in His Father, the Father never forgot the dependence on Him of His beloved Son. Most beautiful is such response between them shown to us in many of the Psalms.

Dwelling in thought on this attitude of intense dependence and obedience, the old Levitical type comes to mind of the attached servant *with ear bored*, who "loved his master and would not go out" from his service. Surely reference is made in this type of Willing servitude to the Saviour submitting to become fettered by a body of flesh and blood such as ours.

Hitherto He was everywhere in a moment throughout His great universe! now tethered to one spot as we are! Too wonderful is this mystery of self-sacrifice! too vast for mortal man to fathom! It was part of the humiliation He endured for us which was incident to His becoming our Substitute.* Yet, always underlaying the form of a servant, was His Divine

* Viewing the fact in this light enables us to realize more fully and sweetly the power of sympathy this tethering to a spot has given Him, for all of us while still in the body; more

Glory. The Lord Jesus able to rule, yet obeying; free, yet under commandment!

In the days of old God had testified openly His approval of faithful and devoted service, as in the case of Abraham, of Moses, of David, and therefore we look for similar testimony, only in higher degree, for the greater, yea absolutely perfect work of His Divine Son.

Such testimony was not wanting. We find it first given on the occasion of His baptism, after thirty years of subject life at Nazareth, when God's voice was heard from heaven in these words: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Again in the third year of His ministry in similar words on the occasion of His transfiguration, of which St. Peter writes thus, enlarging on the Gospel account: "We were eyewitnesses of His majesty, for He received from God the Father, honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the heavenly glory: 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'" See also in his discourse on the day of Pentecost, where he

especially how He can feel for the infirm, the crippled, the paralyzed. "In all their afflictions He was afflicted," for "it behoved Him in every point to be made like unto His brethren."

speaks of the continual manifestation of God's approval: "by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."

And again there was personal testimony on this point from Christ Himself. Speaking of his Father's satisfaction in Him, He says: "The Father hath not left Me alone, *because I do always the things which please Him*," and: "If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing; it is My Father that honoureth Me," the reason for this honouring following on closely: "*I know Him and keep His saying.*"

Lastly, triumphantly was the testimony given in the fact of the Resurrection, when "He was declared to be the Son of God with power"; by "God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour," His resurrection being a conclusive proof of His perfect fulfilling of the Divine Will.

See St. Paul's compendium of these truths: "Great is the mystery of godliness; GOD was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

"The Son of God under the covenant, at His

own Divine pleasure, surrendered Himself, saying, "Lo, I come," for the great ends of God's glory and the sinner's peace, taking the "form of a servant, made in the likeness of man, humbling Himself, and obedient unto the death of the cross." Under this form of servant He hides His glory, not seeking honour from man. This form was a reality just as much as "the form of God" in Him, as truly an *assumed* reality, as the other was an *essential, intrinsic* reality. And being so, His ways were those of a servant, just as, being the Son, His glories and prerogatives were those of God. He prayed—He continued whole nights in prayer. He lived by faith, the perfect Pattern of a believer, as we read of Him, "the Author and Finisher of our faith." In sorrow He made God His refuge. In the presence of enemies He committed Himself to Him, who judged righteously. He did not His own Will, perfect as that Will was, but the Will of Him who sent Him. In these and in all kindred ways was "the form of a servant" found, and proved, and read, and known to perfection. It is seen to have been a great and living reality.

"I will put My trust in Him" may be said to be the language of the life of this Servant from

beginning to end. But His faith was gold, pure gold, nothing but gold. When tried by the furnace, it comes out the same mass as it had gone in, for there was no dross. Saints have commonly to be set to rights by the furnace. Some impatience or selfishness or murmur has to be reduced or silenced; but there has been One in whom the furnace, heated seven times, proved all to be precious beyond expression! How unutterably perfect all the life of Jesus was! and *this life of faith and obedience was answered by the care and keeping of God.* "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." The faith of Him that was serving on earth was perfect, and the answer of Him that dwelleth in the heavens was perfect (Ps. xci.).

But while the Son of God on earth was ever hiding His glory under this form of a servant, His glory was yet owned in all parts of God's dominion. Devils owned it, the bodies and the souls of men owned it, death and the grave owned it, beasts of the field, and the fish of the sea owned it, wind and waves owned it, and so did the corn and the wine. He was "Lord of the harvest," but appeared as one of the

labourers in the field; He was the God of the temple, and the Lord of the Sabbath, but submitted to the challenges of an unbelieving world. (Matt. ix. 12.)

In the person of Christ we have God manifest in the flesh. He would not as a Saviour do for me, a sinner, if He were not Jehovah's fellow. We do not forget the Person in the service. The same value which rested on the services of His life afterward gave character to His death. It was His person which gave all His virtues to His death or sacrifice, and it was His person which gave its peculiar glory to all He did in His course of self-humbling obedience. And the *complacency* of God in the one, was as perfect as His *judicial acceptance* of the other. *Obedience has been glorified in His person,* and shown in all its ineffable beauty and desirableness, so that we are not merely to say that the complacency of God in Him was ever maintained in its fulness, but that it passes beyond all created thought."*

* Extracts from a book entitled "The Son of God."

A SHORT DIGRESSION ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD WHEN CHRIST CAME.

Also a few words about the Angels who "Do His Commandments hearkening unto the voice of His Word."

BEFORE proceeding with our main subject it is desirable to take a glance at the state of things when Christ came as the long-needed exponent of the Will of God.

There was sorrow on earth because that Will was disobeyed there, and disowned. The Lord was forgotten, the weak were wronged, injustice reigned, and evil was everywhere triumphant.

Everywhere! Even in the chosen land where David had reigned and the beautiful temple was built as the dwelling-place of the High and Holy One.

Repeated judgments had desolated that land, alternated with renewed mercies and seasons of peace and prosperity; and invitations of tenderest love were given to the rebellious people to return in heart to their rightful allegiance, but all had been in vain. And so the centuries had crept on, and the great event of which the prophets had

written, and which was to change the face of all things, was now nigh at hand.

At this memorable juncture there was less lack of scriptural knowledge than heretofore, for copies of the Septuagint version were comparatively plentiful, and it was the ostensible business of the scribes who belonged to the most learned profession in Jerusalem to copy out and study its several parts in order to make it known to the people.

But He who had given alone could throw light on the Word; and the Holy Spirit was grieved, yea, His teaching was undesired, and He had long since departed from that wicked city,—departed from all but the little remnant; a few watching, waiting hearts like the aged Simeon and the prophetess Anna; and the studying of the Word in the darkness of the natural man only seemed to increase his moral guilt. For they interpolated it with traditions, and accepted or set aside as they liked best its teachings, so as to give cover to their pride and their hypocrisy. "They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

But such a deplorable state of things could go on no longer in this corner of God's universe.

Rebellion must be quenched by love, and hearts estranged made loyal, by the greatest marvel of self-sacrifice that it was possible for God to give. The dark cloud of man's sin must be rent asunder, and the glorious light of Heaven's truth be allowed once more, in greater fulness than ever of old, to shine upon the earth.

And so the day came, the day—that prophets had longed for,—the day when there was to be increase of joy even where there always was joy! Joy in heaven! shown by the ringing praises of the angels who appeared to the shepherds,—joy because a messenger of peace was come to earth, who would make known afresh there, what the angels knew and ever rejoiced in—the Will, the good Will of God!*

"*Tidings of great joy*" truly this was for earth; but how could it be joy alike in heaven when Christ was absent from His throne? Oh wondrous insight into heaven's exquisite harmony with God's love to man! Yea, and because they loved their King, its inhabitants were willing for His absence. They rejoiced in His anticipated joy when after a little space He would there return in triumph, as the anointed Son of God and the

* See page 27.

Saviour of sinners; that Will made known, that Will accomplished, return with the first-fruits of His toil already secured—a people won captive by His love, kept by His power, and with whom henceforth He would have perfect oneness,—oneness even such as between the Father and Himself!

> "Tell me, ye shining hosts
> That navigate a sea that knows no storms,
> Beneath a vault unsullied with a cloud,
> If from your elevation whence ye view
> Distinctly scenes invisible to man,
> And systems, of whose birth no tidings yet
> Have reach'd this nether world, ye spy a race
> Favour'd as ours?"
>
> COWPER.

How far the angels were admitted into the counsels of heaven we know not. Perhaps the sufferings and abasement of their Lord were not revealed to them beforehand, nor the path of humiliation He must tread; for we read in connection with this subject: "Which things the angels desire to look into."

This may be so or not, but this we know, that *they* had a part allotted to them in this wondrous history to be enacted upon earth. To them was permitted the high privilege of being in a manner associated with Christ throughout His earthly

career, of ministering to His wants, and of strengthening Him at different times. And as they had been the messengers to announce His birth to the shepherds, so it was their joyful mission to tell of His resurrection to the sorrowing disciples, rolling away the stone from the tomb to show that He was its tenant no longer. And when after forty days He ascended into heaven, it was again the mission of some of their glorious number to tell to the men of Galilee that "this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner" again to earth.

And so these messengers of the Lord, "that excel in strength, that *do His commandments*, hearkening unto the voice of His Word," were subordinate actors as well as witnesses, in the grand fulfilling of the Will of God by Him, whose moral attributes were in the work of redemption, to be unfolded and displayed to view in greater magnificence and glory, than heaven and heaven's inhabitants had ever known before.

And in heaven, as on earth, there would be a new song of praise to be sung when, the Will accomplished, and the work for man perfected, Christ should return the victor to His Father,

and the adoring hosts of angels throng round about the throne.

"And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, . . . saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

* * * * * *

And so Christ came! Came for the twofold yet blended purpose exprest in His own words thus:

"I come to do Thy Will, O my God."

"The Son of man is come to seek and to save the lost."

CHAPTER II.

How Christ, in doing the Will of God on earth, revealed Him directly, and indirectly, in His character of love; and how further He taught that honour was due to His word.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth!"

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (as reflected) "in the face of Jesus Christ!"

CHRIST came to do His Father's Will on earth

1. *By revealing Him in His real character of* Love *in His own life before men.*

From the very commencement of His ministry Christ sought to dissipate the prevalent harsh ideas of God, and in His whole life to reveal Him as a God of love.

The nature of those three years of ministry is briefly summarized by Himself in these words:

"Many good works have I shown you from My Father"; and by St. Peter thus: "Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him." The Gospels are filled with such histories of healing, and of how He comforted the sorrowing, and fed the hungry, and instructed the ignorant, "not pleasing Himself," but often, as at Sychar's well, in weariness of body, in hunger and thirst, working on and teaching, in the ardent desire to make known His Father's love, and to save perishing souls.

Every miracle that Jesus did was a miracle of mercy, and the more closely we scrutinize the records of these, and of all the actions of His life, the brighter will appear the light thrown on the love in that Will which was before Him, as "His delight to fulfil," love being woven into its very texture, and going out from Him into "all the ramifications of the need of a sinful world."

A verse referred to above, "*Christ pleased not Himself*," might prompt the question, In what did He not please Himself? The expression must refer, in a measure, to the denying of the wants of His human nature for repose. We are slow to realize how heavy was the toil the Lord Jesus

went through, and how incessant the strain upon Him from the work which crowded in during the days of His ministry, and which was made heavier through "the suffering He endured from the contradiction of sinners." But chiefly must it refer to the limiting of those precious seasons which He enjoyed alone with His Father, when for the time away from the sight of sin and its defilements, from the bustle of the crowd, and the jangling and persecution of men, for then was He not breathing His natural atmosphere of love and holiness ?

But blessed though these seasons were of communing and prayer, they were permitted only to strengthen and refresh Him for the work which He came to do ; and He would not prolong them to please Himself, and thereby shorten for one moment the time which must be spent in activities. "I must work the works of Him that sent Me ; the night cometh, when no man can work !"

In no way do the words lessen the truth of His declaration : "I delight to do Thy Will, O my God ;" perhaps they even intensify it, for self-denial is sweet to a noble heart when incurred for an object of deepest love !

2. Christ further revealed His Father by *direct teaching* about Him.

Of His love. This is specially recorded in some of the sublime chapters of St. John's Gospel, chapters afterwards amplified in the Epistles from the pen of the same apostle, who had so peculiarly drunk in this aspect of the Saviour's work. Quotations are hardly needed here, yet we will pause a moment on the first recorded conversation of our Lord, when He speaks those words of God's love, and of His own part in that love as the willing Sacrifice, which have since proved a revelation of life to some among all generations of men, and which have been as a sheet anchor for faith, sure and steadfast, amid all the tempest blasts of evil and unbelief: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Of His ready welcome for the penitent sinner, as perhaps taught most fully in the touching parable of the prodigal son.

Of His readiness to hear prayer, a fact very often mentioned and pressed upon the attention of His hearers, in these words on one occasion: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto

your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give good gifts to them that ask Him?"

Of His wondrous patience and longsuffering, and of His tender care and provision for all man's need, thus illustrated in the Sermon on the Mount: "Be not ye therefore troubled, saying, What shall we eat, or Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things."

And of many other things which showed how His Father was ever encompassing man with His love, touching on every point which could affect him in the life here and in the life hereafter!

He taught also further concerning *the spiritual nature of the worship which God required*, as in those words: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

And finally, of the manner in which God viewed *His work as Redeemer*, setting highest value upon it, and permitting none to approach Him through any other channel ("No man cometh unto the Father but by Me"), promising eternal life to those who accepted Him, death to those who rejected Him.*

* How beautifully is expressed by St. John his impression of this

3. Christ revealed His Father by using the expression continually of "*Your Father*" throughout His ministry.

When Jesus was a Child in the temple we notice that He had spoken of "My Father's business," and on His first appearance there afterwards as the Messiah, He had called it "*My* Father's house"; but as soon as He began His public teaching, He spoke of His Father to those around Him as "*your* Father." The right He thus gave to use this sweet title of relationship, opening their eyes to see how very near the access was made by which they might henceforth come to God.

Nearer now than ever before—for in the days of the Old Testament saints, God was rarely spoken of as Father; this relationship to His people was dependent on the Incarnation and Atonement, and therefore, like some other truths, could not be revealed until Christ came (Gal. iv. 4-7).

teaching of Christ about His Father! He writes: "This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." And again: "The darkness is past, and the true Light now shineth." He would have us remember that there had been darkness in our knowledge of the character of God, but that since Jesus came the light of His teaching had revealed that He was love.

4. Again, *as the Will of God had been directly revealed in former ages by the written Word,* so was that *word honoured by the Lord Jesus* in being continually quoted as the weapon wherewith to overcome Satan and to refute cavilling and unbelief, also to comfort, strengthen, and teach, and to support and vindicate His own words and His Father's honour. And, excepting in portions which He more fully explained or "filled out," according to the higher teaching and extended revelation, which was needed for the spiritual kingdom He was founding, quoted ever as truth which was unassailable and conclusive.

CHAPTER III.

CHRIST FURTHER CAME TO DO HIS FATHER'S WILL BY A THREEFOLD "FULFILLING OF ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS," THEREBY TO DESTROY THE POWER OF SATAN.

1. *Of the law.*
2. *Of the prophets.*
3. *Of the sacrificial types.*

"Those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled."—ACTS iii. 18.

"That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil."—HEB. ii. 14.

"Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered."—HEB. v. 8.

"When He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me . . . Then said I, Lo, I come . . . to do Thy Will, O God."—HEB. x. 5, 7.

CHRIST came to fulfil the Will of God by *overcoming the power of Satan,* according to the tenor of the sentence pronounced on him in the garden of Eden; a sentence which for Adam

contained the first word of hope as he stood trembling and guilty before God, thus delivering man who "from fear of death was all his lifetime subject to bondage." It was the perfect fulfilling of the law which placed Christ in the position of POWER FOR OVERCOMING. His inherent glory and holiness, His spotless perfection, were not enough to overcome the results of sin; He had to prove Himself capable of fulfilling the law to attain unto that. He did fulfil it, and thereby overcame; adding to His inherent glory, the glory of perfect obedience; by this overcoming further revealing the pre-eminence and glory of His Father, in the grand accomplishment of His Will for the rescue and salvation of man.

THE THREEFOLD FULFILLING.

On various occasions Christ spoke of this threefold fulfilling of the law, of the prophets, and of the sacrificial types as the work which was set before Him. In the commencement of His ministry, of the two first parts He said, "Think not that I am come to destroy *the law* and *the prophets;* I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Of the third, in connection with His sufferings, He spoke oftentimes to His disciples, as we are

told in Matthew xvi. 12. And, when all this was accomplished, after His resurrection, His conversation with the two disciples in the walk to Emmaus was on this same point: "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

On that same resurrection eve in the upper room, when Jesus appeared to His waiting disciples, who yet for joy could scarce believe it was Himself, He forcibly reminded them of His past teachings concerning the three fulfillings. "These are the words," He told them, "which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the *law of Moses*, and in the *prophets*, and in the *Psalms* concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.'

I.—He came to fulfil the law.

By His perfect and spotless obedience, as well

as by His active vindication of it, to fulfil that law, which was the given expression of the Divine Will; thereby upholding the honour of His Father, and showing it forth as a law "holy and just and true," just as it was expressed beforehand in Isaiah's Messianic prophecy:—

"He will magnify the law and make it honourable."

"Nowhere is the full measure of the law's glory to be seen, except in our Emmanuel's life."

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." Thus was it that the Lord Jesus epitomized its two parts when in answer to the lawyer's question concerning it: "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" He said to him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang *all the law and the prophets.*"

Ere we proceed, it is important to note that in this fulfilling of the law *Christ was to be our Example.* The love that meets us here is

different from that studied in the last chapter. There we saw how Christ came to make known God's love *to* men, while here He was to reveal such love as God had a right to expect *from* man, first to Himself, and then to his fellow-man in all the relationships of human life. For "in *all things* it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren."

But this love, whether from man to God, or from man to man, is only a reflex form of God's love, for all true love in either form, must ever be given to us first from God, ere we can return it back to Him again. We can never give to Him aught but that which He has first given to us, nor to each other such love as the law requires to give, until taught of God. This is why in Jesus only could there ever be a possibility of carrying out perfectly its requirements. Nowhere is the impotence of man to fulfil the holy law of God more strikingly illustrated than from this fact.

Let us here again recall to memory how the Lord Jesus was ever revealing His Father to those around Him as a God of love, by teaching direct and indirect, by words and by silence, in miracles as in actions, ever emphatically pointing

Him out, as One to be loved, and as One towards whom a responsive love could not but follow from those whose hearts were opened. Yet while thus manifesting Him, it is a remarkable fact, and full of instruction, that except in the broad inculcation of the Divine law (above quoted), HE NEVER COMMANDED MAN TO LOVE GOD. He seems to have left the application of His teaching on this point, as on many others, to the work and further teaching of the Holy Ghost. He did not, in fact, tell man to love God, because He knew it was not possible for man to do so until born of that Spirit, until that love had been imparted to him. The Lord Jesus speaks of—

1. The love between Him and His Father.
2. Of His own love to His disciples.
3. And of His Father's love to them.

But the uniting link in that wondrous circle of Divine love, which is to form the glory of Christ and His Church hereafter, yea, the joy of the Triune Jehovah, is left unclasped by any command to man to love. It is left with an *if;* "If ye love Me, keep My commands." * An *if* only, but of

* The question may naturally arise why the Lord Jesus gave such explicit command to His disciples to love one another. Perhaps the answer is this :—The great root spring of all power in man to do right comes through the Divine life imparted to

conditional force such as more surely to rivet it in the hearts of His people, more perhaps than any command could do, by the constraining power of Christ's example, and His absolutely new revelations, of the wondrous love of His Father.

When the love of God is dwelling in our hearts,
And the love of Christ constraining us,
As the Holy Ghost reveals Him to us,

then the needful leverages are at work, which are powerful to effect this clasping with gentlest, yet all-prevailing force, and in that union, thus Divinely brought about, the petition of our Lord and Saviour becomes fulfilled, "I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

"I love my God, but with no love of mine,
For I have none to give;
I love Thee, Lord, but all the love is Thine,
For by Thy love I live;

---

him, *and as this life is love*, it cannot be commanded, because itself a gift; while all that flows from it in detail for a holy life. all the fruits of the Spirit, love in chief, are its results. And on these results the Lord Jesus dwells, and gives many a command which was to be made possible for man to obey after the Holy Ghost had descended, and imparted this Divine life, even the very love of God Himself: "*The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*"

I am as nothing, and rejoice to be
Emptied, and lost, and swallowed up in Thee."
MADAME GUYON.

We have only a brief notice given us of the home life of Jesus, but it is sufficient to tell how perfectly He fulfilled the duties of His earthly sonship, and how He "was subject" to His parents at Nazareth far on into manhood, "growing in favour with God and with man."

During the years of His ministry it is not possible always to separate between the love which He displayed as the Revealer of His Father's heart to sinners, and that which He gave as the Son of man to men; they were so intimately interwoven in the Saviour's daily life. But we are permitted to see the latter sometimes in all distinctness, so very, very near He was to us, "touched with a feeling of our infirmities.' Specially we see it in His patience and forbearance to His cruel persecutors; in the lovely home scenes at Bethany; in His tenderness to His disciples in spite of their waywardness; and in wondrous measure on the Passover Eve when instituting the commemoration feast, and when washing their feet, to give them "an example"; and then in all that followed on that night of

agony. St. Peter, referring to this, writes: "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow in His steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."

His last acts of love as the Son of man were from the Cross, even there perfect in fulfilling the law of love. Tender care for His mother, and provision of a home for her; promise of a place beside Him in paradise to the dying thief; prayer for forgiveness for His murderers, were acts such as befitted the closing of the life He had spent on earth in absolute self-forgetting!

Christ further came to fulfil the law by *active vindication of its character and enactments.*

He found it utterly defaced, accretions of all kinds hiding its true proportions from view, traditions of men and contemptible rites and dogmas, obscuring the majesty of its beauty and holiness. Therefore had He to wage war, as well as to fulfil, and by stern words of reproof and exposure, to thrust aside this evil rubbish; while at the same time, by His holy life of spotless obedience, He magnified the law, and showed it

forth in its original fair beauty, as it was when first delivered to Moses fresh from the hand of God!

One of the great causes of the raging of the Pharisees, (the great religious professors of that day,) against the Holy One was this, that He threw the sunlight of truth on their religious hypocrisy, and with scathing words denounced them. These are some of such words He spoke in reference to the dishonoured law: "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge"; and again: "*Laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the traditions of men,* . . . making the word of God of none effect through your tradition which ye have delivered, and many such like things do ye." "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and *have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith,*" "*and the love of God.*"

The description given by Isaiah in chapter lix. may well be referred to here, for those wailing words of the prophet depict alike the terrible state of Jerusalem then, as much as they had done the time for which they were first written.

"Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off, for truth is fallen in the streets and equity cannot enter. . . . And the Lord saw it." "Therefore His arm brought salvation."

There was one portion of the law concerning the daily ritual of the obedient Jew which Christ could not fulfil, namely, all that pertained to the sinner alone in the temple worship. He could not offer sacrifices *for Himself*, for He was holy, and every sacrifice spoke either of Him, the promised Messiah, or of sin to be atoned for.

But the temple itself He loved as the habitation of His Father. Of it He had thus spoken beforehand by the mouth of David: "Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house," (or more literally the home supplied by Thy house,) "and the place where Thine honour dwelleth." And how literally fulfilled we know, for continually was He found there when in Jerusalem, teaching the people the manner of worship acceptable to God, as He walked the courts, and on two occasions expressing by forcible action, as well as by words of burning indignation, His wrath at the unhallowed traffic permitted within its precincts, by the very guardians of the Divine law.

II.—Christ came to fulfil the prophesies of Himself.

These were coextensive with His life on earth. In them the Father had traced out for Him beforehand all the details of His mission to earth as Redeemer of man, from His cradle to His grave, and beyond that to His resurrection. They were given in ever-increasing fulness from the date of Adam's fall to the close of the books of the Old Testament; and not one of those could be left unfulfilled by Him who was the perfect Exponent of His Father's Will.

III.—He came to fulfil the types and shadows of which He Himself was the substance.

It is not intended now to enter into the fulness and beauty of all these types and shadows, so many in number, and so mingled in, first with all the revelations made to the patriarchs of old, and then later on with all the tabernacle and temple services, feasts, and observances. But some of the most marked cannot be passed over without notice, as specially connected with our main subject, given in the title to these pages: "Christ the Exponent of His Father's Will," and these will therefore be explained, if the Lord permit, in a later chapter.

This last fulfilling, after His life of righteousness, was all concentrated in the one great mediatorial act, of giving His life for our life, the very Paschal Lamb!

Ah! then, and then only, on that memorable night in the garden of Gethsemane, in the near prospect of bearing the curse of sin for man, was the Father's Will hard to the Divine Son to accomplish. The living it out had been His delight; persecution He had not shrunk from, toil, hardship, want! But when sin had to be expiated, He knew there must be the hiding from Him of His Father's face, in wrath against the sin He bore. He knew that He must be *alone.*

Hitherto He had been comforted by the sunshine of His Father's presence and smile, the bit of heaven's atmosphere which He had ever carried about with Him; as He said on one occasion when teaching in the temple: "He that sent Me is *with Me;* the Father hath not left Me alone." But now that comforting presence must be withdrawn; the wine-press of God's anger must be trod *alone!* "I looked, and there was no comforter."

It was from such unutterable weight of woe that He shrank for a little space, and in its

prospect sent forth the bitter cry of agony: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." But as this could not be, as there could be no sparing of the Divine Victim, if man was to be redeemed from death and sin, that bitter cry finished with the words of submission: "Yet not My Will, but Thine be done." The ruling principle of His life He swerved not from, and so He went forward to the accomplishing of the work even unto the end.

St. Paul writes of this awful moment of Christ's agony thus: "Who in the days of His flesh when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." How was He "heard"? Not directly, but indirectly. "Angels were sent to strengthen Him," to strengthen His poor bleeding human nature for the superhuman task before it, and to comfort Him with a token from His Father.

With wondering awe and adoring gratitude we would pause here for a moment, and contrast such Scriptures as: "It pleased the Father to bruise Him," Him,—His beloved Son, with this expres-

sion towards our lost world: "the good pleasure of His Will." Good pleasure in causing this *bruising*, this *putting to shame?* Yes, for its redemption was possible by no other means, and the glory of the Triune Jehovah was pledged to its achievement!

And God looked on to a result beyond its redemption, dear as that was to His heart of love, and saw the accession of glory which must redound to His Christ from the toils and conflicts He passed through, when all should be accomplished, and He should return to Him in triumph!

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, . . . that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

And God knew that thereby His glorious attributes would be made more glorious, when, through such *mighty sacrifice*, the plot of the Wicked One to destroy man should be defeated, and himself made captive, chained to the chariot wheels of His victorious Son. And He would see His honour vindicated, His justice satisfied, His righteousness triumphant! And He knew that thereby man, and all the works of His hands, angels, and prin-

cipalities, and powers, would understand, as they never could understand before, the wonders of His Will of love, and the glory of His holiness, for never before had there been occasion when it was possible for them to be unfolded to view as they had been by Christ, in His life on earth, and then in His death, and resurrection, and ascension.

And still further results for the mighty Conqueror, in spoils won from Satan, spoils which in prospect *satisfied* Him. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied"; "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands." Spoils which are spoken of as "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints," and for the joy of possessing which: "He endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God!"

One word more concerning the title of "*Servant of the Lord*," which for all these years upon earth had belonged to Him. Turning again to Isaiah's prophecy, we find that from the close of the fifty-third chapter, where the triumphant conclusion of Christ's work is depicted as that of *My righteous Servant*, that conclusion on which we have just been dwelling, this name exists for Him no longer.

Instead thereof, in the succeeding chapter we find a people spoken of who are called *the servants of the Lord,* those born to Him as the travail of His soul. A new name! never before given excepting in some of David's psalms. How truly blessed! The name He took for His work on earth transferred from Him to His people. Significant sign of how they were intended to take up His work and follow in His steps.

The following remarks from the pen of another will perhaps enforce some of the thoughts dwelt on in the preceding pages:—

"The central point of God's revelation of Himself is the incarnation of the Deity in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord, and the central point in the incarnation is the Cross. There more than anywhere else have we the knowledge of God revealed in, and through, Jesus Christ. We find in the Cross not only an exposition of the love of God, not only a setting forth of the forbearance, and the tender mercy, and the longsuffering of God, but a manifestation also of the righteousness of God, and of His justice, in that He showed Himself there to be just, as well as the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.

"At the Cross we see not one side of the character of God only, but we see the whole of the character of God, or what may be termed His holiness displayed in its fulness. God was there manifesting His love towards those for whom He had a purpose of mercy from eternity, but God was upholding the dignity of His own character also as the moral Ruler of the universe. Therefore Christ must suffer. At the Cross we have the fulness of the display of God's character: tenderness, love, and compassion for the sinner; while at the same time righteousness, justice, judgment toward the sinner."—*W. P. Lockhart.*

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRAYER WHICH JESUS TAUGHT, AND THREE PROMISES WHICH HE MADE TO THE DOERS OF THE WILL OF GOD.

"And when ye pray, say, . . . Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

"For whosoever shall do the Will of God, the same is My brother, and My sister, and My mother."

"If any man will do His Will, he shall know of the doctrine."

"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the Will of My Father."

JESUS further taught His disciples to pray that they also might fulfil His Father's Will, and gave three promises of immense magnitude to those who should do so.

It was in this prayer, taught on the outset of His ministry, that Jesus first directly referred to His Father's Will, a subject henceforth to be often dwelt on. More than fifty times we find it mentioned in the New Testament, while only five in the Old, one of the many proofs of the in-

creased light which Jesus threw upon the character of His Father.

In the words of the prayer: "Thy kingdom come; Thy Will be done on earth as in heaven," two great truths were taught.

First, *how perfectly that Will was done in heaven.*

Secondly, *that it was possible to be so done on earth,* for Jesus would never teach a prayer which He did not intend to answer. And in this case He intended to do more. And He looked forward to that time when every stain of sin should be removed, and there would be a new earth, "wherein dwelleth righteousness."

It may be instructive here to notice for a moment the prayer of David already referred to, breathing as it does the same desire: "Teach me to do Thy Will." Only when taken up by David's Son, there is the addition made to it: "*as in heaven,*" Christ knowing, as David could not know, what heaven was. For heaven was His home, and there He had always dwelt as King, one with the Eternal Father, until now, and He knew the perfection with which the Will was carried out there.

Yet in the far-back ages rebellion had once broken out in heaven, and, though speedily

quenched, and Satan and his rebel hosts driven out from God's immediate presence, it was the results of that rebellion which had brought its King to earth. For Satan, in his malice, had sought out that work of His hands which God rejoiced in, and had brought sin and ruin on His fair earth. And it was to repair this ruin, and destroy evil, that Jesus had come; and He was beginning to accomplish the very prayer He taught, by doing that Will on earth: "as *done in heaven.*" And He was further going to make it possible for man to accomplish it, both by the power of His example on those who accepted His salvation, and also by the infusion of His Divine, all-conquering strength; and by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, whose ministry on earth would succeed His, with the same glorious end in view —"God's Will done on earth as in heaven."

The Three Promises.

Christ gives three precious *promises* to those who fulfil His Father's Will, for now that that Will had had a living Interpreter, and been exhibited in all its beauty, God would expect a closer and more spiritual obedience from man, than in days of lesser light.

The first is a promise of *closest adopted relationship* with Himself: "Whosoever shall do the Will of My Father, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother" (Mark iii. 35).

The second is one of *spiritual discernment:* "If any man will do the Will of My Father, he shall know of the doctrine."

The third of a *heavenly inheritance:* "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the Will of My Father" (Matt. vii. 21).

As the Son was one with the Father, so we naturally find Him linking obedience to Himself with that to His Father, specially as He neared the end of His life on earth, telling His disciples that the proof of their love to Him, would be the keeping of His commandments, and thereto adding further promises.

"All the promises of God are in Him Yea and Amen," and may become our actual possession; yea, it is to His glory they should do so. Therefore ought we closely to enter into their nature; and with all earnestness so to run, that we may obtain." *

* See Chapter on the Promises.

CHAPTER V.

The occasions on which Christ expressed His own Will.

"And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I Will; be thou clean; and immediately his leprosy was cleansed."—Matt. viii. 3.

"For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them even so the Son quickeneth whom He Will."—John v. 21.

"Father, I Will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given me."—John xvii. 24.

CHRIST rarely expressed His own Will, for He was among us "as One that serveth," but occasionally He permitted a flashing forth of His Divine sovereignty *to will.* The three marked occasions of this are very striking, as illustrative of all His work for man.

1. *In the healing of the body.*

It was in response to the appeal of the leper, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me whole," that the blessed words of healing power were spoken: "I WILL; be thou clean." And

the result was immediate cleansing from the loathsome disease. (Matt. viii. 1, 2.)

2. *In the quickening of the soul.*

When Jesus was at Jerusalem in the second year of His ministry, He healed the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath Day. This called forth angry persecution from the Jews, who said "He had broken the Sabbath . . . and made Himself equal with God." Jesus then in answer declared, in fuller measure than elsewhere recorded, the equality that existed between Himself and His Father, on this point—that He possessed inherent life, with the result: "The Son quickeneth whom He will" (John v. 21).

3. *Concerning the Church's future with Him in glory.*

On this occasion it was to His Father Himself that He expressed His Will, as recorded in John xvii., that chapter in which we are privileged to hear some words of His Divine communing, and of His wondrous prayer for His Church. It was just after the Passover Supper and His last prolonged conversation with His disciples, that Jesus seemed to be in Spirit alone with His Father; and during those moments of holy calm, immediately preceding the agonies of Gethsemane and

Calvary, it was, that while praying for the perfect oneness with Himself of His ransomed ones, He uttered these words: "Father, I WILL that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me."

This was the only occasion on which the Son expressed His Will to His Father, and it comes in most sweetly at the close of His perfect life, after He could say: "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have *finished the work* which Thou gavest Me to do." The work finished, the reward to be claimed! He seems here already to grasp in His hands the fruits of His toil, and to present them with Himself to His Father! The people whom He was ransoming He must have very near to Himself in the glory He was about to inherit. His redeeming work, "that mystery of His Will," had created a necessity in His heart of love, and for Him there would be a lack of joy in heaven were they not there for whom He had suffered. They must be near Him, sharers of His joy, witnesses of His glory, possessors with Him of all the results of His triumph!

Ere we pass on from this subject, where thought

would love to linger, it is needful that we should refer to the fact of *Christ's resurrection*, for this was *the triumphant proof* of His perfect fulfilment of the Father's Will, and the seal which the Father affixed thereto. Indeed, His resurrection was as integral a part of God's Will in Christ, as the Atonement itself, and for us is the grand central truth around which our hopes rest, for "if Christ be not risen, then is our faith vain."

And now, as the result of Christ having been "the Exponent of His Father's Will," in life, in death, in resurrection, thereafter would He, as the ascended Saviour, make the way of holiness possible for His people, not only by the track of His footprints, which ages would not efface; but by His perpetual presence and help; by the Holy Spirit's influence, exercising such a moulding power on their hearts, as would bring them likewise into conformity with THE GLORIOUS WILL OF GOD!

PART III.

GOD THE HOLY GHOST.

"It gives important insight into the methods of the Divine economy in this world when we observe that the promises of God are meant not to suspend, but to stimulate our prayers. And accordingly, after that He has declared He will give the clean heart and the right spirit, He saith, Yet for all these things must I be inquired after. Let us cease to wonder, then, that prayer should appear among the foremost indications of the Spirit of God being at work with us."—CHALMERS.

PART III.

THE WILL OF GOD CARRIED ON BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD."

"If we ask anything according to His Will, He heareth us. And if we know that He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions desired of Him."

"For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

FOLLOWING on the work of Christ as *Exponent of His Father's Will* comes that of the Holy Ghost, whose part as the promised Comforter and Teacher is to make known that Will, and form it in man's heart.

The only verses directly in this connection are those in Romans viii., quoted at length as the heading of this page.

There is a beautiful linking on of the work of

the Holy Spirit with that of the Lord Jesus in the wording of the first sentence in these verses. We read of Him that when on earth, "*He bare our infirmities*," and that now, as the ascended Saviour, "*He is touched with a feeling of our infirmities*"; while of the Holy Spirit it is said here, that "*He helpeth our infirmities*."

The way He helps, St. Paul goes on to tell us, is by working in our hearts, so as to make them responsive in desiring those things for which He inclines us to pray, these things being all *according to the Will of God.* Linking on again to this in closest connection, we find given us in 1 John v. 14, 15, the result of this intercession of the Spirit, even the full answer to our petitions. "If we ask anything according to His Will, He heareth us." Heareth us, this means, with a favourable ear. And knowing this, to faith is given the sweet consciousness that we actually *possess already* in God's intention the things for which, taught of the Spirit, we have asked. "*We have* the petitions that we desired of Him," such petitions being ever and only presented in the name of Jesus, it is superfluous here to add.

Precious truth! Not one can fall to the ground! Sometimes the answer may be imme-

diate, sometimes long delayed. In some cases we shall never see it; in others the fulfilment may be in quite a different manner from what we expected. But we need have no fear of the ultimate result. Every petition, even the faintest breathing made after *the Will of God*, is assured of acceptance. God had a purpose in prompting the desire by His blessed Spirit, and it is His delight to fulfil it. "Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come."

This operation of the Holy Spirit on man's heart, in the first instance, implies a quickening of his nature, and the dawning of spiritual life; and the very fact of being taught to pray carries encouragement with it.

In the prayers of St. Paul, given us in his Epistles, is it that we have the fullest unfolding of the kind of intercession which is taught by the Holy Spirit, and if we examine closely into them, we shall learn how mighty are the things for which we are invited to ask; things, which but for this teaching we could never have dared to ask, so altogether are they beyond the imagination of man's heart, to conceive it possible that God would give him. "*All things are yours*"

was evidently a promise realized by Paul both when he prayed for himself, and when he interceded for others; and as to his great faith and strong grasp of God's intentions mighty things were given, so will those be given to all likewise, whose faith is strong as his.

PART IV.

MAN.

"But transformation of apostate man
From fool to wise, from earthly to Divine,
Is work for Him that made him. He alone,
And He by means in philosophic eyes
Trivial, and worthy of disdain, achieves
The wonder, humanizing what is brute
In the lost kind, extracting from the lips
Of asps their venom, overpowering strength
By weakness, and hostility by love."

COWPER.

CHAPTER I.

God's Will wrought in man and upon man, done by man, made known to man.

SUCH is our comprehensive heading!

Dear readers, as we enter into this most searching subject, which begins and embraces *every portion of our spiritual life*, let us with still and quiet hearts bow low before the Lord, and ask that His Holy Spirit may throw light upon it, and only He Himself speak to us as we meditate thereon!

Our first thought must be one of wonder that Divine love should condescend to associate us with Christ, in carrying onward the work which He began, and that to us should be given an important part in the accomplishment of God's Will on earth, a part concerning His Church which must be finished ere the coming of Christ in glory, and in which He looks for us to be, as His Will is wrought in us, *the living expositors of Him, and His mind, as He was of His Father.*

And yet of natural fitness there is none, nought but worthlessness! Not one of the three requisites for fulfilling God's Will have we; all must be imparted to us. But ere this can be, we must first be called, made alive from the dead, washed, prepared, "*made Willing*," ready to ask with the newly converted Saul: "Lord, what *wilt Thou* have me to do?" Truly the material is unpromising! None but the hand of the Master Workman could undertake such "transformation of apostate man"! Blessed be His name that He does undertake it. From beginning to end He is seen as the Author, Giver, Sustainer, of all that which enables His people to carry out His designs, making His "strength perfect" in their weakness.

Still it is not possible that He should raise us up at once to the standard of His Divine Son. *Growth* is the order of His spiritual kingdom as well as of His natural one. Ours is infant life at first, and it is only by degrees, as the understanding is opened, and we obediently follow on in the path chosen for us, that we can have what belongs to mature Christian life—knowledge of the Lord.

Therefore it is that God's order of imparting

the three requisites for fulfilling His holy Will is inversely that which we have seen was possessed by Christ, besides that, while here below, imperfection and sin cling to our best; it is not as with Him, where all was perfect.

The order is as follows:—

1. Willingness to obey His Will by faith.
2. Increase of oneness with it.
3. Increasing knowledge with it.

And then the glorious climax in view of presently "*growing up unto Him in all things*," and of "*knowing even as we are known.*"

So mounting up to where Christ began! *

Then will the mystery of God's Will be fully accomplished in His people, the mystery which has been disclosing now for ages, but which will not be perfectly unrolled to view until His people are reigning with Him in glory.

"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii. 18).

"Now we see through a glass, darkly, but *then face to face;* now I know in part, but then

* See page 51.

shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

Let it be well understood that this "knowledge" of which we speak is that which is implied as a holy intimacy of communion, becomes established between the Lord and His obedient children, and He is thus enabled to fulfil the desire of His heart in revealing to them His thought and His mind, according to the blessed promise: "I will dwell in them and walk in them."

Of such knowledge it is that the Lord Jesus spoke in that wondrous communing with His Father ere the scenes of Gethsemane: "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

This is the knowledge which we have seen in an earlier page is promised to those who *do the Will of God*, and in proportion as we grow in spiritual life, so will it be imparted to us, for, let us clearly remember, it is impossible for unexercised faculties to discern, what the spiritual mind alone in exercise can grasp.

A much-honoured servant of God, who during long years of ministry had often dwelt on the necessity of growth in holiness and knowledge,

in his dying illness referred to this truth, adding, in solemn tones never to be forgotten: "Ah! how little do they know who are content with the alphabet of Christianity what they will lose when they are before the throne!"

That this spiritual discernment is the result of spiritual culture is a truth so clearly enlarged on, in a book which has become dear to many of us, that I venture to quote from the chapter.

After speaking of the error common among believers that "the Holy Spirit must reveal the mysteries of the spiritual life first to their intellect, and afterwards in their experience," the writer goes on to say: "And God's way is just the contrary of this. What holds true of all spiritual truth is specially true of the abiding in Christ: *we must live and experience truth in order to know it.* Life-fellowship with Jesus is the only school for the science of heavenly things. '*What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter,*' is a law of the kingdom, specially true of the daily cleansing of which it first was spoken and the daily keeping. Receive what thou dost not comprehend, submit to what thou canst not understand, accept and expect what to reason appears a mystery; believe what looks impos-

sible, walk in a way which thou knowest not,—such are the first lessons in the school of God. '*If ye abide* in My word, *ye shall understand* the truth'; in these and other words of God we are taught that there is a habit of mind and life which *precedes the understanding of the truth.* True discipleship consists in *first* following, and *then knowing* the Lord. The believing surrender to Christ, and the submission to His word to expect what appears most improbable, is the only way to full blessedness of knowing Him.

These principles hold specially good in regard to the teaching of the Spirit. That teaching consists *in His guiding the spiritual life within us to that which God has prepared for us, without our always knowing how.* On the strength of God's promise, and trusting in His faithfulness, the believer yields himself to the leading of the Holy Spirit, without claiming to have it first made clear to the intellect what He is to do, but consenting to let Him do His work in the soul, and afterwards to know what He has wrought there. Faith trusts the working of the Spirit unseen in the deep recesses of the inner life. And so the word of Christ and the gift of the Spirit are to the believer sufficient guarantee

that He will be taught of the Spirit to abide in Christ. By faith he rejoices in what he does not see or feel: he knows, and is confident that the blessed Spirit within is doing His work silently but surely, guiding him into the life of full, abiding, and unbroken communion. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; it is His work, not only to breathe, but ever to foster and strengthen, and so to perfect the new life within. And just in proportion as the believer yields himself in simple trust to the unseen but most certain law of the Spirit of life working within him, *his faith will pass into knowledge.* It will be rewarded by the Spirit's light revealing in the Word what has already been wrought by the Spirit's power in the life."

The following incident in the life of Haydn strikingly illustrates this truth of growth into the mind of another.

Haydn was accustomed to say that he never composed a line of music without an idea. In instructing his pupils, he perpetually insisted upon the necessity of seeking to realize some definite and well-marked idea in every piece of music, without which, he truly said, "music

becomes mere jingling sound and means nothing." It is related that Haydn had a pupil who, although possessed of a fine voice and ready capacity to learn, seemed to the great and intellectual mind of Haydn to be so entirely destitute of ideality or power of expression, that the harassed master regarded him as a mere piece of mechanism, an instrument to give forth sweet sounds, but never touch the heart.

He had devoted some time to teaching him the music of his grand *Creation*, but the total lack of ideality exhibited by his mechanical pupil tried his patience so heavily, that at length he determined to make but one more essay with him, and in case he manifested no signs of improvement to relinquish for ever the task of his instruction.

When his pupil presented himself for the final essay, to the master's amazement he sang like a new creature. Mind was in every note, and the delicacy and grace with which he intonated the pathetic strains of the *Creation* drew tears from the much-moved composer.

As soon as the lesson was ended Haydn asked what spell had wrought the change. "Master," the student modestly replied, "it is no change in myself; I have only been going *through a new*

process of education. My singing is now influenced by the fact of my having read Milton's sublime poem of 'Paradise Lost.' Chancing to find that poem at the house of my English teacher, I have been closely studying its wonderful imagery. By these means I now discover new and fresh beauties in your own noble oratorio of the *Creation,* I know and understand what you would represent, and begin to apprehend the meaning of the sublime music which gives that idea expression.".

A somewhat similar musical experience occurred in the life of F. R. Havergal, which she narrates to us in her exquisite poem entitled "The Moonlight Sonata." *

The lesson conveyed by these incidents it is needless to dwell on here; by such easy transition they become to us beautiful allegories full of heavenly meaning.

We find in the history of Moses and the Israelites a forcible illustration of the manner in which the Lord adapts His revelations to the capacity of the receiver. In the Psalmist's words the contrast is thus drawn: "He made known

* See Appendix.

His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel,"—*His ways* being a revelation of the mind and intentions of God, *His acts* their external manifestation only. This latter was all that the rebellious Israelites were capable of perceiving. But to Moses the Lord could speak as to a friend. "The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." How great the contrast! And later on, as the desert wanderings were nearly ended, we have a glimpse given us which tells how this intimacy of communion had still further deepened between the faithful servant and his Lord. On the occasion when Aaron and Miriam spoke evil words to him, the Lord quickly interposed, calling them forth to the door of the tabernacle, where He stood in the pillar of the cloud; and these were some of the words with which He reproved them: "My servant Moses . . . is faithful in all Mine house; with him will I speak mouth to mouth even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold." Grand acknowledgment of faithful service! Grand reward to be taken thus into the counsels of the Almighty!

And it is into a like position of blessedness

that the Lord would bring His children now. Wondrous truth! "*Ye are My friends* if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Our thoughts have been passing onward to the ultimate results of an obedient walk with God, but we must now retrace them and in the next chapter endeavour carefully to consider the steps by which this blessed position can be attained *of knowing and understanding the Will of God.*

Reference must frequently be made to Part II. as we proceed, in order to the linking very closely the thoughts and truths expressed there with this part of our subject. In this linking is strength, for is not Christ our Example in His life on earth in all that appertains to our position of service?

CHAPTER II.

THE THREE COMMANDS WITH PROMISES ATTACHED, AND OTHER WAY-MARKS WHICH WILL GUIDE INTO THE DESIRED OBEDIENCE, ONENESS, AND KNOWLEDGE.

FOLLOW ME.

"If any man serve Me, let him follow Me, and where I am, there shall also My servant be. If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour."

ABIDE IN ME.

"I am the Vine; ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without Me ye can do nothing."

CONTINUE YE IN MY LOVE.

"If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth, but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father *I have made known unto you.*"

"The Spirit of truth . . . shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you."

"AS the servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the heart," are words which show how very close the partnership with

Christ is, in which God expects us to dwell. Their consideration will perhaps best enable us to arrive at the solution of what we seek to know and firmly to grasp hold of,—how to become possessed of the three requisites for carrying on this work of fulfilling the Will of God from the heart, that so we may be enabled for this blessed position of oneness with Him in service!

Let us closely track the footsteps of Him whom we would follow. We have already looked upon these while tracing out the perfect life of our Lord upon earth, and we have marked the entirety of His response to the Will of God, as that Will was wrought in Him and upon Him,—not as a transforming power to bring Him into oneness with it, for that oneness He had ever possessed and had brought to the accomplishment of His work, but as a power under which He subjected Himself,—and we have seen too how when all was finished His title of subjection, *The Servant of the Lord,* was devolved henceforth on His people.

As we searched into that wondrous life did not our hearts burn within us, and did we not feel a touch of His hand as we meditated thereon? May the Holy Spirit keep alive the fire that He

has kindled, and bring with power into our daily life the things which He has revealed to us of Jesus, as the Exponent and Fulfiller of the Will of God, enabling us to work out clearly how we may best follow in His steps!

Reference to Part I. is needful here to see the processes which must be carried out by the Divine Will, before ever this devolved title of service can belong to us. It is by the "good pleasure" of that Will that—

We are predestinated,
Begotten by the Word of truth,
Saved,
Made alive,
Adopted as children,*

and all this before we are placed in a position for service!

Accepting salvation is not service;
Believing in His redemption is not service.

We are doing God's Will in this acceptance of His gift, in the running into the shelter of His beloved Son, in being Willing that He should exercise His love upon us, and lift us out of the mire and clay and set our feet upon a Rock;

* See page 28.

but it is not until we are there, and because there, adopted as children and joint heirs with Christ, that we are *in the position for true service*, such service being only possible for the redeemed.

When God has thus far wrought His Will in us and upon us, and that we consciously become His children by adoption and faith, acknowledging His ownership in us, then it is that we begin to understand somewhat of the Divine love, and to discern how the Lord expects that we should place ourselves trustingly in His hands, to be moulded as *He Will,—yielded to Him.* "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." No longer walking according to the flesh, but "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." For He would not have us idly rest in the sweet joy of adoption, nor in its first wondrous privileges, but He looks to see the result of this yielding in the strong fervent desire of the soul, stirred to such petition as this: "LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?" or to that of similar strain spoken by David: "Teach me to do Thy

Will, for Thou art my God," a petition in other words like that taught by the Lord Jesus Himself, but which, alas! is so often repeated with no care to understand its full meaning: "Thy Will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

The gracious words which Jesus speaks to each one in answer to such question or petition are those of the first command found at the heading of this chapter.

Follow Me!

Follow Me! Learn of Me! Depend on Me! and obedience to these words shows that there is indeed the desire to do God's Will, and to be subject to it. Such willingness, such self-surrender, is our FIRST STEP INTO LIKENESS WITH CHRIST, and therefore *our first step into holiness.* A momentous and blessed step it is, proving our right thenceforth to take on us the title of *servants of Christ.* "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me, and where I am, there shall also My servant be."

Concerning such an era in the soul's history we have the true solution in Philippians ii. 12, 13, where St. Paul writes: "*Work out* your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for it is God*

which worketh in you BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO of His good pleasure."

Note the clearness with which in these words the two parts in God's Will are referred to :

His Will done *in us* and *upon us*, resulting in—

His Will done *by us*,

or, in other words, His *actings on us* first, before there can ever be *actings out* for Him. There can never be the working out of His blessed Will by the natural man ; only as the Lord Himself possesses us, and works it *in us* that we may *work it out*, can He be thus glorified in His children. This truth cannot be too clearly expressed, nor too emphatically insisted on. God *must be* all in all !

But let us take heed that there be nothing in us to hinder Him from thus carrying out His blessed Will in us. No lingerings of self, no disobedience to His commands, no careless walk. But a spirit of recollectedness cultivated concerning the service we have entered upon, and the holiness to which we are called. For the servants of Christ must not only be passive to be wrought on, but willing to work. Passive to allow God's work ; active and willing in carrying out His requirements.

In order to link this chapter with the corresponding one in Part II., it is needful that we should pause now for a moment to consider the title: "*servants of Christ.*" * How grand it is! a royal one indeed, because He bore it! Wherefore is it devolved on us?

It is because we are the fruits of Christ's work and victory, given to Him of old by the Father ere the world was made, won by Him from death and the grave, and by Him to be presented back to His Father! Presented back, but not as He receives us, sinful and defiled,—He would present us spotless, holy, unblamable.

Servants of Christ! We are the people born to Him when "He saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied"; a people whom He saw with long prospective glance through time and eternity, saw as the people who should carry on the fulfilling of God's Will, when He had made it practicable for them to fulfil it. Wherefore it is that He gives to them, when they enter His service, just the same work to do, in this sense, which He did when on earth as *Servant of the Lord.* It is work in the same household, to be done in the same spirit, *from the heart.* The Son

* Page 90.

has done it and entered into glory, and now His people are to do it—to do it with delight, unremittingly, carrying it ever onward, until it is accomplished, and the end shall come, when Christ shall "deliver up the kingdom to God."

And how shall these servants of Christ be able to carry on such a work? What must their attitude be toward their Master? Surely it must be that of simple but intense DEPENDENCE AND TRUST, just such dependence and trust as He Himself manifested toward His Father, and of which obedience is the result; and this dependence is learnt as the Holy Ghost reveals Christ to the soul. For

> As Christ revealed His Father to the world,
> So does the Holy Ghost reveal Christ to the Church.

And in proportion to the amount of such revelation, so will the response of dependence and trust deepen from the obedient soul, causing an ever-increasing likeness to Him who was *the perfect Servant*, and who to us is not only rightful Master, but also "the Author and Finisher of our faith." For never was faith perfect as His!

Lord Jesus, Thou didst trust Thy Father per-

fectly, because Thou knewest Him perfectly ; and Thou hast in Thy life on earth before men revealed to us His wondrous love ! Help us because of this Thy teaching and example, that our trust too may be perfect. Whatever hinders the outflow of Thy gifts, Lord, of the revelations of Thy love, all shadow of distrust or self-will, take it away ! take it away ! And so give to us from the rich treasury of Thy grace that every soul shall be satisfied, and be made strong in Thy name to overcome. If dependent on Thee, Lord Jesus, Thou art bound to furnish *all* for Thy suppliant children, because this very dependence is obedience to Thy gracious commands !

Here it is that we get at the root spring of all obedience acceptable to God, and therefore of all power to fulfil His Will. The parallel which Scripture gives us between Christ as a Servant and His people as servants, in this aspect of absolute dependence, is very striking, extending into every detail of our lives, as it did into the details of His. For

> As Christ was dependent on His Father,
> So in like manner must His people be dependent on Him.

Let us look into the details of this important

truth. We need to discern all the guide posts that are given us—to use all the helps for our Divinely appointed work; there are enough, but not one too many, and this is one of the most important.

We find that His people are to be—

Dependent on Him for life:

"I give unto them eternal life." "He that eateth Me shall live by Me."

Dependent for right of access to God, and adoption as sons:

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." "By whom we have access into this grace."

Dependent for power:

"Without Me ye can do nothing." "I give unto you power."

Dependent for words:

"It shall be given unto you what ye shall speak."

Dependent for works:

"He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also."

Dependent for teaching through His Holy Spirit:

"The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things." "He will guide you into all truth."

Dependent for resurrection:

"The Son of man quickeneth whom He will."

Followers of Him:

"Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts."

"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

Effectual prayer to be made through His name alone:

"If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it."

The proof of their love to be obedience:

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments." "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."

His promise is to be ever with them:

"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." *

The above is but a tithe of the Scriptures on this truth, but enough to clearly prove it.

Let those among us who are thirsting for a life

* See parallel Scriptures on Christ's dependence page 54.

of fellowship with God search into their hearts and see if they can answer the crucial question suggested by the parallel—"*Do I trust wholly*—trust for pardon, for life, for sanctification?" with a simple affirmative, and say: "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I trust Thee." It is well for the soul that does so, well indeed!

Not more needful is it in an earthly campaign that soldiers should trust their commander, than it is that our trust should be implicit in the wisdom, care, love, of the Captain of our salvation, sure that His Will for us is absolutely perfect in all that He orders or permits. This trust alone can ensure unquestioning obedience and make it easy.

To such trusting servants of Christ what are the wages? it may be asked. Although the Lord Jesus said: "In the world ye shall have tribulation"; He also added "*but be of good cheer*, I have overcome the world." We would not, therefore, answer such question in the words of the hymn:

> "If I find Him, if I follow,
> What His guerdon here?
> Many a sorrow, many a labour,
> Many a tear,"

but rather in the words of a recently converted

gipsy man, who said: "*He pays in advance, and keeps blessing you all the way!*"

"In full and glad surrender,
I give myself to Thee,
Thine utterly, and only,
And evermore to be.

"O Son of God, who lovest me,
I will be Thine alone,
And all I have, and all I am,
Shall henceforth be Thine own.

"Reign over me, Lord Jesus!
Oh, make my heart Thy throne!
It shall be Thine, dear Saviour,
It shall be Thine alone.

"Oh, come and reign, Lord Jesus,
Rule over everything!
And keep me always loyal,
And true to Thee, my King!"

F. R. Havergal.

CHAPTER II. (*continued*).

"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the Will of God" (GAL. i. 4).

"For this is the Will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thess. iv. 3). "By the which Will we are sanctified" (HEB. x. 10).

"Having made known unto us the mystery of His Will according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself" (EPH. i. 9).

TO the trusting soul further processes of God's blessed Will are unfolded in its power—

To save from sin,

To deliver from this evil world,

To sanctify,

and with these *the secret* that will enable the soul to yield evermore an unfailing response to the Divine hand that would *save, deliver, sanctify.*

"FOLLOW ME" were the words, we saw, which Jesus speaks to the newly awakened and willing ones.

"ABIDE IN ME"

is the command which quickly follows on that,

and which contains the secret referred to. For obedience to it brings about the *second step we would make into likeness with Christ*, that of

ONENESS WITH GOD'S WILL.

For, blessed be God, we have not to struggle into that oneness; it is there for us, ready made to our hand if we will only accept His plan for attaining it. Not more one is Christ with God, than He would have us to be one with Him!

Indeed, to glance backward, may we not affirm that this oneness of will is included in the right and full appreciation of the glorious truth of the Atonement, or *At-one-ment?* For by it the soul is cleansed from sin and clothed with Christ, and therefore oneness with Him in a measure, is the immediate possession of each converted soul. "He is our Peace who hath made *both one*, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition . . . *for to make in Himself of twain one new man.*"

Oh that we would not grieve our Father from the very outset of our Christian course as we do, by stopping short at what He offers us! satisfied with the half-reception of a truth instead of its whole, though kept thereby in the wilderness, when if the whole were received, we should be

landed straightway in the fair land of promise! Lack of faith and dependence on our Master, sluggishness of soul, self-will, disobedience, are the causes of this stopping short. Again would we affirm that full possession we may claim at once, for the Title Deeds have been made over to us, with their Divine inscription: "ALL THINGS ARE YOURS"! Growth, of course, is required in order to enjoy and understand our heritage, as also that spiritual discernment which increases and deepens in proportion to our obedience, according to the promise of the Lord Jesus Himself; but that word stands sure from the outset—"All things ARE yours."

The picture which St. Paul gives of this oneness is marvellous. See its compendium in Colossians iii.:—

> Planted together in the likeness of His death,
> Buried with Him, risen with Him,
> Quickened with Him, rooted and built up in Him,
> Complete in Him.

And elsewhere: "Christ is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification." And then the prayer of our Lord Himself, which goes even further: "I pray . . . that they all may be one

as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us."

Can we abide in Christ, and not be one ?

Can two walk together except they be agreed ?

Oh no! impossible! "Let the Master in! Let Him in," to take full possession of our hearts, "we in Him, and He in us," and Oneness with the Will of God must follow!

As in redemption, so in each succeeding step *all is ready* for the soul made Willing, the soul brought into oneness. How wonderful the simplicity of God's plan for us! Truly as we view it with spiritual discernment, mountains vanish, the crooked becomes straight, and the rough places plain! In this abiding we enter with new distinctness into the words: *Put off the old man,* and *put on the new,* for the old man can never enter into companionship with Jesus. In this abiding the soul proves how "good and perfect and acceptable" is the Will of God; the yielding becomes more entire because we there learn to know more of Jesus, and so our Will—the very centre and stronghold of our being—melts into harmony with His, by the sweet fusion of Love. No longer is it self-surrender, but His Will comes to be loved, yea, welcomed ever as the best and happiest thing.

There, too, are we above the storms of this world. It is there that calm and rest inhabit! The very atmosphere of oneness with God's Will stills fears, removes doubts, fills the heart with joy and peace and Love! Happy it is to trust, happier still as the trust deepens into this oneness from dwelling in the secret place of the Almighty! "A God-possessed soul!"

A result of this step into oneness will be power to carry on the Master's work on the same lines as He did, for

As He represented His Father,
So are His people to represent Him.

Weighty such responsibility, and poor must the representation, alas! ever be; but that it has pleased God to lay on us such a work, we could not lift our eyes toward it. Revealing Christ is only again revealing God—*God manifest in* the flesh—a work only possible for us because first done by Him; a work only possible as the soul is kept cleansed from sin, and because He is with us always to guide and to teach, and to mould our minds into His!

The difficulties of the way, and the details of the work, it is not our province to enter into now, only to lay down the broad lines in which the

servants of Christ are to walk. The sum and substance of what God looks for in us, then, is this: that we should represent and make known, by the love and beauty of our lives, the beauty of Him who is all-glorious; that we should, like Him, minister to the needs of a perishing world, and seek to rescue souls from death. This is the Will of God for the servants of Christ. And in proportion to the growing oneness of our Will with His, will there be power in our lives for this; certainty in our witness for Him, courage in our actions, gladness in our hearts, such as shall glorify God and enable us to do Him true and loyal service. So shall we be a people prepared, manifesting His life in our lives, increasing His sway upon the earth, making ready for the coming of the King!

A third step into likeness with Christ is possible for those who respond to the third command which is spoken to the abiding:

"CONTINUE YE IN MY LOVE."

This is the command, gracious as the preceding ones, and telling of a love that never wearies, but rejoices in closest union with His

people, which when obeyed, places us in a position for obtaining the third requisite we seek after. For this *continuing to abide* brings to us

KNOWLEDGE OF THE WILL OF GOD.

It cannot be otherwise, for such abiding, and obedience, causes intimacy of mind and thought, such as changes service into friendship!

"Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth, but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you."

Wondrous condescension to place us in such a position, with such a title of love! There it is that He can make known to us the purposes of His glorious Will! There it is that the gracious Spirit never fails to fulfil His office of Revealer of Christ; and there alone, dwelling in Him, is such knowledge possible. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant." Of such knowledge the inspired Psalmist writes that it "is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain unto it." No! we cannot attain to it; it is *one of the gifts of God*—a gift ever ready for the trusting

heart, wholly yielded, kept by His power in close abiding.

Lord, prepare us that we may be filled with the knowledge of Thy Will! Our capacity may be very small, but Thou canst enlarge it. Enlarge it, therefore, we pray Thee, and fill it to the brim!

On this blessed subject we have dwelt at some length in the preceding chapter, and, therefore, will not add more here, beyond the expression of an ardent hope that none of us may stop short of the possibility held out to us; but so "press on toward this mark of our high calling," as to bring joy to our Father's heart, enabling Him to carry out toward us His gracious Will of ever revealing Himself to us more and more.

Unto Thee would we render adoring praise and thanksgiving, our God and King, for this glorious Will of love, and all that it unfolds! As its properties are increasingly revealed to us, our song of praise must ever rise higher and higher, that we are amongst the sheltered ones within its love, and that its gracious actings belong to us as the heritage of the redeemed. Blessed place of joy and rest and peace! There would we ever abide under the very shadow of the Almighty!

We cannot better close these thoughts than by

quoting from the writing of the faithful servant of Christ before alluded to * in a passage which carries us on beyond this learning time, to the time of full fruition :—

"The future life of the saint is but the development of what he learns here ; a fuller insight into truth, a clearer note of praise, a deeper love, a more perfect obedience, a more active life for Christ. The principles of holiness are all implanted here, but the brighter sun of heaven, the presence of the Lamb, and the bright beaming smile of His countenance, seen full face to face, will ripen every grace to perfection, and call forth every truth here learned into the highest heavenly development !

"The grace of God now manifests itself in this life separating from evil ; hereafter that separation will be complete and eternal. This grace now draws the soul into communion, and so transforms it into the likeness of Christ ; hereafter that likeness will be perfected, because "we shall see Him as He is."

In clear foreshadowing we see how when that glorious time shall come—

* The late Rev. Alexander Hamilton Synge, B.A., author of "Law and Grace," etc.

"What we have asked shall then be given
in secret, openly.
If for power to resist then removal from all
sin, sin.
If to enjoy fellowship then to stand and hear
with Jesus, Him.
If asked to be made like then transformed into
Him, His image.
If to be made faithful, then crowned.

"Every sigh, tear, sorrow, will find its answer then in the sympathy of Jesus.

"Those who sought Him most here, will be nearest to Him there!

"Those who most entered into His mind on earth, shall then have His purpose most fully imparted to them!

"Those who were foremost in His ranks among the reviled, shall be the first in His train when He comes as Victor!

"Those who have not refused to drink of His cup of sorrow, shall be the first to drink with Him new wine in the kingdom of the Father!

"Those who have kept their garments, shall walk with Him in white, and shall receive at His hands the white stone and the new name, and shall sit down with Him on His throne,

"KNOWING THEN, EVEN AS THEY ARE KNOWN!"

THREEFOLD SCRIPTURES.

IT is important and very interesting to note that the threefold step into likeness with Christ, on which we have been dwelling, or the possession of the three requisites for fulfilling the Will of God, correspond in a very marked manner with the *threefold abiding* which the Lord Jesus promised to His disciples on the Passover Eve.

For which St. Paul makes a *threefold prayer;*

For which there is a *threefold provision of grace;*

And on which St. John is emphatic in his first Epistle in the oft-repeated words—*to do, to abide, to know;* the doing or *obedience* preceding the abiding or *Oneness,* and the Oneness being the certain forerunner of *knowledge.*

Let us place these Scriptures together and see how

I.—*The threefold abiding*

1. "I will pray the Father, and He will give you another comforter that *He may abide* with you for ever."

2. "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me, and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love Him and will *manifest* MYSELF to Him."

3. "If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and *we* will come, and *make* OUR *abode with him.*"

Corresponds with

II.—*St. Paul's threefold prayer*

1. "That ye may be strengthened with might *by His Spirit;*"

2. "That *Christ may dwell* in your heart by faith;"

3. "That ye may be able . . . *to know* the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all *the fulness* of *God.*"

III.—*And with the threefold provision of grace:*—

1. To every one of us is given grace according to the *measure of the gift of Christ;*"

2. "That we may *grow up unto Him* in all things, which is the Head even Christ, . . . according to the effectual working in the measure of every part;"

3. "Till we all come into the unity of the faith and *knowledge of the Son of God*, unto a perfect man, unto the stature of *the fulness of Christ.*"

Or,

Unlimited grace *the measure,*
Wherewith we may have power *to do* God's will.

Close union with Christ the Head—*the measure,*
Whereby we may *become one* with His Will.

The fulness of Christ in us—*the measure,*
Through which we may gain *the knowledge* of His will.

IV.—And with *St. John's threefold word*

1. "This is the love of God that we keep His commandments;"

2. "He that keepeth His commandments *dwelleth in Him;*"

3. "The Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may *know Him* that is true."

And then the crowning word of Christ Himself:

"*I in them and Thou in me, that they may be*

made perfect in One: that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me."

SEVEN PROMISES

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature."—ST. PETER.

SEVEN PROMISES TO THE DOERS OF THE WILL OF GOD.

Prayer heard:

"If any man be a worshipper of God and doeth His Will, him He heareth."

Prayer heard and answered:

"This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His Will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hear us, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him."

The soul shall be well nourished:

"If ye be Willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."

Closest relationship to Christ:

"Whosoever shall do the Will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Spiritual discernment:

"If any man will do His Will, he shall know of the doctrine."

Entrance into glory:

"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord,

shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the Will of My Father."

Everlasting life:

"He that doeth the Will of God abideth for ever."

Oh, what a heritage is here for the obedient! Let us seek to make ourselves acquainted with these treasures, which to all God's people are not treasures troven. Some one suggested that there might be the question asked by some readers of this book, "What is offered to me if I obey?" Here is the answer. Oh, what a wondrous galaxy of blessings! Truly it is of such as these that Paul speaks "as the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, . . . but God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit."

Well then, seeing what is promised, seeing such marvellous incentives for obedience to the Will of God, who will not seek to be competitors for obtaining them? Shall we hear such gracious words, see such a sheaf of riches, and not seek to be partakers therein? God forbid! There is another thought to be considered also in connection with them, besides the joy of their possession, —it is this, that their possession is needful to our

being true representatives of Jesus. If our exchequer is poor when it might be rich, this is not to God's glory, but the very reverse.

Surely we who desire to be loyal to our King cannot allow this, we of whom the Lord Jesus spake thus to His Father: "The glory Thou gavest Me *I have given them*"! The queen of Sheba marvelled at the attire and the food of the servants of King Solomon, and shall the world see nought to wonder at in the servants of a greater than Solomon?

Mark, it is the obedient who are to possess the promises, who are to display this gift of "glory." *The obedient.* Alas! obedience is a word painfully associated in many minds with *coercion*, that is, the Will of another in opposition. And no wonder at this, because of the sin, and lack of wisdom and love which so generally characterize the rule of earthly friends or masters, as well as because of the unsubdued Will in the governed, which desires only its own way.

But in regard to obedience to God from His wholly yielded ones, *coercion cannot be;* it is a thing impossible. Their Will having become fused with His, in them God reigns supreme, and obedience to Him comes to be increasingly

their natural life. In obedience to God true freedom alone exists. Man may talk of independence, but we never can be independent. The slayer of souls is master of all hearts, until the voice of the rescuing One is heard, and He has come Himself to reign in us and over us.

> "He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
> And all are slaves besides!"

The contrast drawn by St. Paul between the liberty of the children of God, and the bondage of the national man is very striking, as well as his statements of the complete deliverance God would make.

Delivered from—the bondage of corruption,
Brought into—the glorious liberty.

God cannot in His faithful love leave any of His children to their own Wills. How can He? and would they wish it? None surely can answer "Yes"! And yet many act like it, by resisting God's Will and encouraging counter currents, and so their lives are full of frettings. *Liberty* in service they understand not, nor joy in obedience. It is too deep a source of joy for such to taste, for it is hid with God, and only given to those hearts wherein He dwelleth as *Sovereign*

Lord. They alone can enjoy the sweets of true liberty, and so be like Christ was, free, yet under commandment.

Obedience was marvellously glorified in Christ: "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." Oh that that word OBEDIENCE might to us become most precious, be interwoven with every thread of our lives! Then indeed should we practically understand the joy of deepening oneness with Him.

What are we to obey? In what is our obedience required? may be asked. To answer these questions is very simple,—turn to God's word and there search out His commands. It is best that each one should get them thus fresh for Himself. Take, for instance, the Sermon on the Mount, and find out the commands (there are some twenty) given in that manifesto of the Heavenly King. These laws of the kingdom being in most perfect harmony, how could they be otherwise? with the Divinely given code at Sinai. Similarly search out and write down all His other commands, as given in the Gospels, and then arrange and compare with commands searched out from the Epistles. Think over

them, pray over them, and there will be no further doubt as to the details of obedience for which God looks in our lives. Such searching will have blessed results and make us thoroughly furnished unto good works!

Let us now briefly look at the heritage of the obedient as here placed before us.

The first two promises are—PRAYER HEARD and PRAYER ANSWERED. We can well understand how he who obeys, stands on vantage ground incomparably higher and surer from whence to expect answers to prayer, than he who walks carelessly. This truth was plainly discovered by the Heaven-taught man at Jerusalem who had just received from the same Divine hand both bodily and spiritual sight, and whose words are quoted above (St. John ix.). Not only is the prayer heard, but the prayer being first given, is according to the Will of God; and thus it is not possible but that the blessing for which we ask should become ours in His own best way.

In these Promises we have another wonderful linking with Christ in the days of His flesh; His prayers and supplication being heard and answered, because though a Son *He had learned obedience.*

Our third promise is that THE SOUL SHOULD BE WELL NOURISHED. This is ever fulfilling by night and by day to the obedient because the closely abiding ones. It must be so in clearest analogy, because the very life of Christ, the sap from the vine root, flows direct into its branches. "He shall be like a tree transplanted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruits in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

The next three promises, exceeding great and precious (already touched on in Part II.*), were spoken by the Lord Jesus Himself. He threw further light upon them in conversation with His disciples on that memorable passover night, and again after the day of Pentecost through the promised "gift of the Father," sent "to guide them into all truth."

There are words in Hebrews ii. 11, 12, following on the grand description of the ascended and glorified Saviour, which sweetly remind us that that NEAR RELATIONSHIP *with Himself* which He promised when the "Man of sorrows" is a promise He is carrying out now; after reassuming His Divine kingship, He is not ashamed to

* See page 95.

call by the tender name of "*brethren*" His sanctified and obedient children! On this St. Paul often dwells, using such figures as these: "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ"; "The household of God," the family of God, sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, members of Christ, an habitation of God, and even more, *partakers of the Divine nature!*

In this position of near relationship, the promise of SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT becomes increasingly fulfilled, and vistas of glory are given to the eye of faith which beholds. Higher and higher, nearer and nearer, such is God's plan for His obedient ones, sometimes through the discipline of a cross, always through closer acquaintance with the Lord Himself. Thus it was with Bunyan's Christian when he had reached the needed altitude and could look through the revealing glass as he stood on the Delectable Mountains. Risen high up above the valley, the view expanded to him, and many a thing which before was puzzling, became understood by the faithful pilgrim, besides that the glory of the Celestial City, to which he was hastening, was clearly discerned in the distance.

The next promise we come to in order is that

of the HEAVENLY INHERITANCE, or entrance into the kingdom for the doers "of the Will of My Father." Contrast this word of our Saviour with another spoken to Nicodemus on the memorable night which seems to have decided him to be His disciple: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven"—not even see it, not even dimly discern its glories! There is a primary meaning belonging to this promise which we must not overlook, showing how the kingdom of heaven may be tasted of now. "The kingdom of God," Paul writes, "is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost;" and surely this is now the blessed possession of all God's children who are consciously yielded to Him. But in its fulness of meaning both this promise and the one succeeding to it, that of LIFE EVERLASTING, faith looks forward to. Not yet are they ours, nor can they be until we put off this mortal body. But the Title Deeds which we hold in our hands make them over to us then, as sure and certain possessions. "He is the Mediator of the new covenant, . . . that they which are called might receive the promise of an eternal inheritance." "An inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in

heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God."

"For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body," "and so shall we be ever with the Lord."

Our beautiful work is nearly done, and we thank our God with adoring gratitude for giving such an one to do for Him. It has brought the writer into the nearer presence of the King, sometimes into converse with Him as with a Friend. In thinking out the relationship between the Father and the Son, in Part II. glimpses have been given beyond previous thought or conception, of the immensity of the glory and beauty of that relationship. And as Part IV. has been written, more clearly has been understood the wonders of the work of grace, and the depths of that Will of love which has apportioned to us such a heritage as we find to be ours, and which has conceived, and is ever carrying on such a wondrous scheme for raising us into oneness with Christ. Truly the ransomed of the Lord may ever re-echo more

and more David's song of praise: "He crowneth us with lovingkindness and tender mercies!"

As we survey these thoughts first of Christ fulfilling, and then of His people being taught to fulfil, we are reminded of the stately pillars, Jachin and Boaz, their representative symbols; which stood at the entrance of Solomon's temple, the one beautiful as the other, the same stability, the same exquisite details of lilywork, undistinguishable indeed because of *my comeliness which I have put upon thee*, fit emblems of the oneness with Christ in which God views His people; His inheritance in them, as their inheritance in Him!

We close this portion with the glorious promises at which we have done little more than glance, for this little volume is intended to indicate the waymarks of the Christian's life, rather than to trace it out in its varied ramifications. All the thoughts in it need expansion far fuller than has been given, and the more expanded, with the Holy Ghost as Teacher, the more precious will be the reward in discovering deeper things of the love of Christ, and in gaining more knowledge of the real nature and beauty of the Will of God.

Step by step we have seen the development

in spiritual life in the obtaining of those three requisites for fulfilling the Will of God which were possessed by the Lord Jesus, and which land us into the desired knowledge. And, because it is of God, may we not venture humbly to believe that the truth assumed in our title will be blessedly verified in the lives of many of our readers, and that they will go on stirred up with fresh courage as they see the bearings of their way-chart, finding increasingly as they "grow up unto Him in all things" that there is indeed FULNESS OF JOY in true knowledge of the Will of God ?

A FULFILLER OF THE WILL OF GOD.

"And Ananias said: The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldest KNOW HIS WILL and see that just One and hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard."

"PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST BY THE WILL OF GOD," SPECIALLY CHOSEN FOR THIS WONDROUS KNOWLEDGE.

ST. PAUL repeatedly tells how that he holds his commission as an apostle by *the Will of God,* and besides is chosen for the knowledge of it. In his life we have as a sequence so wonderful an illustration of the possibilities that exist of knowing and living out this Will, that we shall find it most instructive to look into it closely in this aspect.

From the moment of his conversion onward he never swerved from the position he then took up of unquestioning obedience and subjection to the Will of God. Struck to the earth by the vision of heavenly glory, at once and for ever, all opposition seems to have gone, and the strong human Will to have been surrendered to the Divine. We see the keynote to all his future life of service in the question which he then asked of

the Lord Jesus, with broken and contrite heart: "Lord, what WILT THOU have me to do?"

To the Lord's response then given, "Arise and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee what thou shalt do," Saul obeyed and went (see Acts xxii. 11-16). For three days he waited in fasting and supplication, and bodily darkness, until the promised direction was sent. It came by the mouth of Ananias in full and gracious words, with a triplet of rich and heavenly promises such as would best prepare him for the mission to which he was foreordained, and speed him onward in it with hope and courage. They were as follows: "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldest—

"KNOW HIS WILL,
"SEE THAT JUST ONE,
"HEAR THE VOICE OF HIS MOUTH,"

Paul's petition to know, and God's intention toward him *to make known*, strikingly meeting in the first clause of the triplet.

Such a preparation and such promises further still reveal to us the secret springs from which henceforth his life flowed on, in unbroken and growing service to his Master. The *chosen one*

for this wondrous knowledge! Pre-eminently the man to whom was given insight into the counsels of God! No wonder then that we find him often writing about it to his converts in later days.

We know not exactly when this *Willing* service melted into *Oneness*, or the Oneness into *Knowledge*, in Paul's rapid spiritual development, but we can see distinctly the marks in him of the promised revelations, and can note the steps of onward progress, as we either read his history from St. Luke's pen, or meditate on his own teaching given to the churches.

Long years after we are permitted to discern how deeply those words of his consecration were engraven on his inmost soul, when he referred to them, while addressing his angry fellow-countrymen from the castle-stairs at Jerusalem. And he could have told, had he been allowed to continue his address, of how their fulfilment had been beyond all he could ask or think; that to him the promised revelations had been exceeding abundant; he had SEEN, he had HEARD, he had been brought into KNOWLEDGE of the Will of God!

Yet a little later on we find Paul again referring to that memorable epoch in his defence before Festus. More fully than elsewhere he

then related the words spoken to him by the Lord Jesus as he stood before Him speechless and blinded by the glory (see Acts xxvi. 16-18). Paul was so well instructed in the Old Testament Scriptures, that we cannot doubt how presently as he thought over those wondrous words, in measure repeated to him afterward by Ananias, certain passages in Isaiah must have flashed on his mind, in which the Lord Jehovah promises to His anointed Servant *that the Gentiles should be His inheritance.* And as he discerned in the Lord Jesus the marks of the anointed Servant, a thrill of gladness must have filled his soul, while, linking these words with those of his commission, he saw devolved on him the mighty privilege of being the herald-preacher to these Gentiles, and so the instrument used for bringing in the firstfruits of this His inheritance to the feet of his blessed Master! Such thoughts seem to underlie various passages in his Epistles, as in Ephesians iii. 8 and Romans xv. 15, 21, and elsewhere.

We want not many words of our own in this chapter, but rather that Paul should speak for himself. We want to discover what were his thoughts of the Will of God and what it wrought

in him. We want, by searching into the writings of this deeply taught apostle, to get insight for ourselves into the mystery of that Will, which is none other than CHRIST! Christ given, Christ crucified, Christ glorified, for the purpose of man's redemption and man's exaltation; insight such as shall quicken *our* tardy steps into better service, into growing likeness to our Master! Is it ever in pathetic strains that Paul speaks of that Will as of something hard, something to be shrunk from? Verily no! but far otherwise; he speaks of himself as privileged mightily in that it was revealed to him, with abounding praise as he proved increasingly its character and provisions, and of how it was the thing more desired by him than all else.

So happy is he in its orderings for him, that he rejoices even in sufferings, counting those as *light afflictions* which the Lord Jesus Himself had characterized as great ("Thou must suffer great things for My Name's sake"). And having found the joy of knowing this Divine Will, Paul longed intensely that his beloved converts might be sharers with him in this joy,—therefore his sublime prayer that they might "BE FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL."

Let us now gather together the rich clusters of his experience and see the triplet of promise in fulfilment, the latter clauses of this triplet being indissolubly bound up with its first, and the one, therefore, to be viewed in connection with the others, just because Christ is the object of each.

The revelations successively made to Paul were needful because this was the commencing era of the Christian Church. Concerning them we note that while in the first, already referred to at the time of his conversion, he saw but *the glory* of the Lord Jesus while he heard His voice, in the second, some three years later, *he saw Himself:* "I saw Him speaking to me." This was in the temple at Jerusalem, and is referred to by him as a trance; it was then that he received his commission more fully as an apostle to the Gentiles again direct from the Lord.

In the third vision (probably at the same time as the last, and also at Jerusalem), Paul was privileged to yet higher things, even to the being caught up into paradise *and seeing the Lord of glory there!* He writes of this wondrous occasion to the Corinthians, and how he had heard un-

speakable things, and had received abundance of revelations.*

The other times in which Paul was refreshed with a sight of the Lord Jesus it was nearer and sweeter still, for He appeared then by his side as a tender Friend, full of sympathy and love, and at moments when the tried Apostle was sorely needing Divine comfort. The first of these was at Corinth when he was "in weakness and fear and much trembling," and the Lord met his fear with the gracious words: "*Be not afraid, . . . for I am with thee.*" The next was in the castle at Jerusalem on another trying occasion, when the Lord stood by him and told him *to be of good cheer*, and that he should bear testimony for Him at Rome. And a third time was in Rome itself (see 2 Tim. iv. 17).

Truly with such a Master and with such fulfillings of His promises, Paul could not but become ever more and more rooted and grounded in his faith and allegiance! Yet glorious as the actual visions were, and great their results, we seem to see, as we take a general survey of Paul's writings, how his chiefest spiritual growth, after

* Some consider that the trance at Jerusalem and this vision were identical.

the first grand impulses had been given him, came from that insight into the mind of God which is the heritage alike of all His obedient children, and of which Paul writes, as Christ was revealed to him continually more and more through the trials and events of his pilgrim life, as "the growing up unto Him in all things." Also, though to him alone direct manifestations of Christ had been made, Paul seems to have expected from his followers not a whit less of whole-hearted service for the Lord than he himself was rendering; seeking, too, with all the power of his masterly pen, to persuade every one taught of the Spirit that they could obtain the like. Whenever he can he changes the *me* into *us*, as though he would share all his most precious things with them, and so yearning after their growth that he would urge them to press on, yea, if possible, to pass on before him in the knowledge of Christ.

Paul, being yielded up unto God, well understood his GLORIOUS LIBERTY in Him, and kept in this abiding place of safety, the Lord was able to impart to him not only life to live, but also life more abundantly. The empty vessel thus held by the full-flowing fountain of grace was

ever welling over for the thirsty world around him. His life and spiritual career often remind one of the perfect elaboration which takes place in the natural things around us—light out of darkness, life out of death. And of such analogy he must have had conscious experience when writing of baptism in its symbolic imagery—"Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

As he had placed himself unreservedly in his Lord's hands, so he loved to dwell often on the RIGHT OF CLAIM which the Lord had on all he was, and on all he possessed, forcibly expressing this in words such as the following: "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God with your bodies and your spirits, which are His." "For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before prepared that we should walk in them." "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross

of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He cared also to dwell on the fact of how he held his commission of service direct from God, repeating in five of his Epistles: "Paul, an apostle *by the Will of God.*"

The marks of OBEDIENCE which became such service were ever seen interwoven with his life and teachings: "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." "As the servants of Christ doing the Will of God from the heart." "Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Such was the kind of service he desired to render to his Lord.

So, too, was his DEPENDENCE most absolute. On one occasion he asks the question: "Who is sufficient for these things?" and further on triumphantly answers it with the assertion: "*Our sufficiency is of God,*" and elsewhere writes: "I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of God may rest upon me." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." "I live by the faith of the Son of God." Glad words these, telling of his satisfaction in

this dependence, and how he could experimentally testify to the fact that Christ was to him all in all. We seem almost to hear him repeating those words spoken by the Master whom he so closely followed: "I delight to do Thy Will, O My God," and: "I do not Mine own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me." Why? Because "*not I, but Christ that dwelleth in me.*" Paul was never in the wrong place for his work; how could he be when absolutely depending on his Lord for guidance? "*I will come to you by the Will of God,*" he writes to the Romans, and elsewhere speaks in the same strain concerning his movements as well as concerning his teaching.

In this dependence or trust, in this Christlike life of loving faith and obedience, Paul found strength and courage for his arduous life-mission of preaching Christ to the perishing heathen. It enabled him to endure and to look on without fear to coming trials and persecutions, yea, even to rejoice in them. "*Most gladly,*" he writes, "will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore *I take pleasure* in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong."

To do the Will of God in making Christ known as well as in following on to know Him more, was the ruling passion of his life. With what absorbing interest he worked for this, and watched the growth and extension of that kingdom he proclaimed! "In all things," he writes, "approving ourselves as the ministers of God." "We are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, be ye reconciled to God." "From Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." How he rejoiced when he heard of the faith and love of the saints in churches he had founded, and mourned over the reverse! (see 1 Thess. ii., 2 Cor. ii. 4, etc., etc.).

While preaching Christ as a Saviour from death he also preached Him as a power to enable a holy life, as in these words: "*This is the Will of God, even your sanctification.*" "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and *true holiness.*" "For ye are bought with a price; therefore *glorify God* in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might *deliver us* from this present evil world, according to the Will of God and our Father." And again: "The very

God of peace *sanctify you wholly:* and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved *blameless* unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." He felt the necessity therefore of Christ being seen in the everyday details of life, enumerating these details minutely, and telling of the transformation which should take place in each child of God. His breast was filled with such intensity of love for others, as was second to none but Christ, self never appearing to enter into his calculations, because the love of God was shed abroad in his heart.

Paul was not only a worker for Christ, but a WARRIOR, and none knew better than he did the nature and strength of his enemies. "We wrestle not," he writes, "against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against *the rulers of the darkness of this world,* against spiritual wickedness in high places." Against *false brethren,* too, "unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." But he knew also how to get fitted in the armoury of Christ; and so, after enumerating his enemies, he gives us a list of the weapons with which he could furnish himself

therefrom, elsewhere adding: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh." "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." And in a strain of thankful praise: "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

The direct words of Paul on the Will of God concern—

1. His own personal mission and movements.
2. The Church's destiny and duties.

He also gives there commands concerning it, and offers up petitions for the saints that this Will may be made known to them and be done by them.* These commands are concerning what manner of *service* it is which the Will of God requires :—

"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may know what is that good and acceptable and perfect Will of God."

"Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the Will of the Lord is."

* See page 37.

"As the servants of Christ doing the Will of God from the heart, with Good Will doing service as to the Lord."

"In everything give thanks, for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

Or,

Intelligent service,
Whole-hearted service,
Glad and praising service.

Such commands, written by him to whom the Lord had revealed Himself, tell how sweetly he understood in his own life the blessedness of such service. Note how he uses the word *Good Will.*

The herald angels sang of Good Will;
Paul the Apostle says Good Will.

Blessed agreement between heaven and earth! between the ministers there and the saints here! An agreement carried on now, and ever will be, deepening in intensity as its wonders are unfolded through the ages of eternity!

Of the promises offered to the doers of God's Will Paul speaks with glorious certainty, of that of *near relationship to Christ,* as though possessed by him in blessed fulness, and of that of

spiritual discernment, as given to him ever increasingly. And this because there was a constant pressing forward to attain to it, a counting "all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus."

In prayer and intercession with what mighty faith did he enforce his petitions, as one who truly had a right through Jesus Christ to mighty answers, according to the promises to the doers of God's Will, at the same time valuing intensely the prayers of the saints for himself, and pleading for them with touching earnestness!

While looking forward with brightest anticipation to the *eternal weight of glory* to which he was ever nearing, Paul enjoyed as a present possession *the kingdom of God* in "righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost." "Rejoice with me," he writes to the Philippians. "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice." And to the Romans: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us. . . . We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Truly he knew on earth a foretaste of that joy which was to be fully revealed in glory!

But of that, the future glory, he found it hard

to express in words his anticipations: "To me to live is Christ and to die is gain." "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "Mortality shall be swallowed up in life." "For our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Such and many other kindred passages throughout his Epistles reveal how real and unutterably glorious to him was the eternal future.

Further still, we find in his latest Epistle extant a jubilant note as of warrior's triumph! He writes to Timothy: "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith! Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." True to the spirit of his Master, as continually exhibited throughout his life, he appends a further word to those of his own personal expectation. "And not to me only," he adds, shall the crown be given, "but unto all them also that love His appearing." As his Master would share all with

His ransomed ones, so would Paul not be content to be alone in the presentation of a crown to him.

Our remarks may fitly here draw to a close. In these records of unimpeachable truth which the Holy Ghost has given us, we have seen, as we sought into them, how from the beginning to the ending of his Christian course, Paul kept the faith; how from a persecutor of Christ he became a planter and founder of Christian churches; how his whole life was permeated with the glorious all-animating desire to wholly serve his Master; and how in him therefore, through the grace given him, through the close abiding, and the onward ardent seeking, he became the possessor of *the three requisites*, and so in a wondrous measure A FULFILLER OF THE GLORIOUS WILL OF GOD!

PART V.

IN DARK CONTRAST—UNREGENERATE MAN.

"None sends his arrow to the mark in view
Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue.
For though, ere yet the shaft is on the wing,
Or when it first forsakes the elastic string,
It err but little from the intended line,
It falls at last far wide of his design;
So he, who seeks a mansion in the sky,
Must watch his purpose with a steadfast eye.
That prize belongs to none but the sincere,
The least obliquity is fatal here."

COWPER.

IN DARK CONTRAST— UNREGENERATE MAN WORKING OUT HIS OWN WILL.

The Nature of his Will; under whose Rule it is; in what resulting.

IT is not likely that these pages will be perused by any to whom the title of Unregenerate still belongs, yet not the less solemnly would we point attention to the awful truths displayed in the selection of Scripture belonging to this Part,* not only because it will remind those who are Regenerate of the depths of evil from whence they were rescued by the wondrous love of God in Christ, but also because it must stimulate them to increased pity and compassion for the former, and to more prayerful and unwearying efforts to win them into allegiance to the Will of God.

We have seen the blessedness of knowing and obeying this Will (our own Wills yielded), and

* Pages 38-40.

how glorious is the consummation! Now in sad and dark contrast must be considered the awful results and end of wilful ignorance thereof, and of determined working out of the natural sinful Wills in opposition to God's Will. If fulness of joy is the portion of the former, as surely are destruction and misery the portion of the latter, both now and onward through eternity.

What are these Wills? These natural *Wills of the flesh and of the mind*, to which the Unregenerate cling so tenaciously? Under whose power are they? And what are the works therefrom resulting? Let us turn to the Scriptures for answers to these questions, and there we shall find them given by those who speak from past experience.

St. Peter says: "The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought *the Will of the Gentiles*, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries."

St. Paul gives similar testimony to the character of these Wills, and further informs us of the power which swayed them and how their owners were in "THE SNARE OF THE DEVIL," walking "according to the course of this world, according

to the prince of the power of the air, *the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*, . . . fulfilling *the Wills of the flesh and of the mind.*" "Foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures; living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another."

What a fearful description of these Wills! what a category of evil resulting therefrom! None can say it is false or overdrawn. Wherever we turn we see such passions governing the world at large. A cloke of decency may be thrown over some of the grosser forms of evil, but they exist none the less, and none can deny it. Could it be otherwise when the Wills are under such dominion? the devil, the slayer of souls, the enemy of mankind, the roaring lion that ever goes about seeking whom he may destroy, their tyrannical master?

"The whole world lieth in darkness"; and man, because "his deeds are evil, loves darkness more than light";—this is why he has ever turned his back upon the pure and holy law of God, and has submitted himself WILLINGLY to be taken captive by the devil, and to be "the servant of corruption." In the words of another:

"This world has always exhibited enmity

towards God. 'For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse,'—there is what may be called *the natural religion.* When they got this glimpse of God in the field of nature, of which we hear so much—when they got some conception of the power of the Deity, 'they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened,'—*there is man's progress in the light of natural religion.* 'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,'—*there is man's intellect in the progress of natural religion.* 'Changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things,"—*there is man's conscience in the light of natural religion.* 'Who changed the truth of God into a lie,'—*there is man's love of truth in the light of natural religion.* 'And worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever,'—*there is man's religion in the light of nature.* 'And even as they did not like to retain God'—they did not approve of God—'God gave them

over to a reprobate mind.' Is it not awful? Just think of the description given by the Holy Ghost of man as he is by nature in this proud world."*

In Romans vii. 8 we find what is asserted of the mind or Will which belongs to man in the world: "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." It does not say the worldly mind is "an enemy," for an enemy may be changed into a friend. Enmity is never changed. James iv. 4: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Drawing-room and fashionable society, the gaieties and splendours of this world, which say, "I do not need you, Christ," know ye not that the friendship of such a world, with all its embellishments and beauties, is enmity against God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God. "Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?" 1 John ii. 15, 16: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." What world? The coarse, vulgar, low,

* Rev. Dr. Brookes, of St. Louis.

obscene, drunken world? No. The devil does not expect us to love that. The beautifully polished, the elegant, the cultured world. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the Will of God abideth for ever."

WHAT THE WILL OF UNREGENERATE MAN CULMINATED IN.

When the time came that the mystery of God's wondrous Will of love was to be unfolded in the coming of His beloved Son, let us see how the world received Him,—"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Sad and humiliating truth! The world did not know its own Christ who came to save it. John iii. 19: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." This is the heaviest burden that rests upon a ruined world,

that light has come into it, but that men love darkness rather than light. Now if a man love the darkness, of course he hates the light. John vii. 7. Read what Christ says to His own kindred —and this shows that family relationships will not reveal the knowledge of God—"The world cannot hate *you*"—why? these brethren still belonged to it—"but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."

But the little band of faithful disciples He classes with Himself in the world's hatred. John xv. 19: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Ver. 25: "He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But this cometh to pass that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated Me without a cause."

How unutterably touching it is to find that without a cause they turned a deaf ear to the sweetest invitation that ever fell on human ears, just as He was closing his work. "Let him that

is athirst come, and whosoever Will, let him take of the water of life freely." But their Will was against taking aught that the Lord Jesus offered them. And as the years of His ministry passed their hatred increased. His holy life, His acts of love and mercy, were a perpetual reproach alike to the openly wicked and to the hypocritical Pharisees. This was why they hated Him; it was *without a cause!* This was why they continually sought to put Him to death—out of their way!

God did not create these evil passions, yet did He make them subservient to His Will, and, at the appointed moment, caused them to turn on Himself in order to the working out and fulfilment of His own most holy Will. The day came when the Will of man appeared to triumph. Christ was seized, arraigned, and condemned to death. Roman justice hesitated to give legality to the sentence of the multitude; but policy prevailed over justice, and so it was that Pilate asked, "Whom WILL YE that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas." And as "they were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified, Pilate DELIVERED JESUS TO THEIR WILL." Jesus, the Lord of glory, was crucified. By this sin of darkest dye man exhibited in fullest

measure the nature of his Will. The prince of this world, though recognizing Jesus as the Son of God, yet evidently doubted His supreme power over death and the grave, and therefore urged on the passions of sinful men to the deed, a deed, however, which, in God's magnificent ruling and overruling, was to prove his own destruction, while giving deliverance to his captives, and opening the gates of heaven to many that were in his toils.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that THROUGH DEATH He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

The judgment of those who know and DISOBEY THE WILL OF GOD.

This is an awful subject, but one we must not shrink from looking into. Hear the words which the Lord Jesus speaks thereon :—"That servant which knew his Lord's Will and prepared not, neither did according to His Will, shall be beaten with many stripes."

What are those stripes ?

1. *Banishment from the presence of the Lord.*

"Those who know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."

2. *The being shut up to the company of the devil, and everything that is vile, and false, and cursed.* As the tree falls, so it lies, and thus the sentence: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

The Will that has been out of harmony persistently with God's Will shall be so now, without invitation to be otherwise.

The Will that has said: "Our lips are our own. Who is Lord over us?" shall then speak its blasphemies with no power to restrain.

The Will that refused on earth to listen to the tender pleading of the Lord Jesus: "Why will ye die? I am come that ye might have life," and that would not yield to His loving rule, shall then find no deliverance from the rule of the cruel master to whom it surrendered itself while on earth.

> "Hear the just law, the judgment of the skies!
> He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies,
> And he that *will* be cheated to the last,
> Delusions strong as hell shall bind him fast."
>
> COWPER.

APPENDIX.

THROUGH the great kindness of Miss M. G. Havergal, various gems have been selected from her sister's much-prized writings, such as would illustrate our subject, and printed here and there through this volume. The beautiful poem, of which an abridgment follows, has been referred to in Part IV., Chapter I., as a parable which shows the training needful to the understanding of the glorious Will of God.

THE MOONLIGHT SONATA.

(*Some Stanzas of the Introduction and Poem.*)

The ills we see—
The mysteries of sorrow deep and long,
The dark enigmas of permitted wrong—
Have all one key:
This strange, sad world is but our Father's school;
All chance and change His love shall grandly overrule.

How sweet to know
The trials which we cannot comprehend
Have each their own Divinely purposed end!

He traineth so
For higher learning, ever onward reaching
For fuller knowledge yet and His own deeper teaching.

. . . . . .

Nor only here
The rich result of all our God doth teach
His scholars, slow at best, until we reach
A nobler sphere ;
Then, not till then, our training is complete,
And the true life begins for which He made us meet.

. . . . . .

Are children trained
Only that they may reach some higher class ?
Only for some few schoolroom years that pass
Till growth is gained ?
Is it not rather for the years beyond,
To which the father looks with hopes so fair and fond ?

. . . . . .

And for such service high thy God prepareth thee.

What though to-day
Thou canst not trace at all the hidden reason
For His strange dealings through the trial-season ?
Trust and obey ;
And, like the child whose story follows here,
In after-life and light all shall be plain and clear.

Then follows the story of the child as she sorrows over her difficult music task, "so long and hard, so strange and stern," and with tears she entreats her teacher to give her easier music that she can understand.

"It is not beautiful to her,—
She cannot grasp the whole :
The master's thought was great and deep,—
A mighty storm, to seize and sweep
The wind-harp of the soul.

"She only plays it note by note,
With undeveloped heart ;
She does not glimpse the splendour through
Each chord, so difficult and new,
Of veiled and varied art."

Her appeal is sent to her father, whose answer, earnestly longed for, comes in these words :

"'The hardest gained is best retained';
You learn not for to-day :
I cannot grant your fond request ;
Your teacher certainly knows best,
So trust him and obey.'"

After hearing the letter the teacher asks :

"'Will you believe that I know best,
And persevere, my child?'
She answered, with a little sigh,
'Yes : I will trust, and I will pray';
And then her teacher smiled."

Years pass, and Alice, grown to womanhood, is asked on a summer evening for music.

"Give now the master's masterpiece ;
All silent we will be :
And you shall stir our inmost souls,
While like a fiery river rolls
Beethoven's harmony.

"An instrument was by her side,
A new and glad possession,
Whose perfect answering conveyed
Each delicate and subtle shade
Of varying expression."

Then follows a wonderful description of the sonata as played by her, its exquisite melodies, its depths and meaning.

After its conclusion, amid the murmuring delight and thanks of all who heard, the rich approval reached her heart of a competent judge who

"Drew near and spoke. 'For many a year
That marvellous work has been most dear,—
Known, loved, and studied long.

"'I own, like you, allegiance true,
And deemed my insight clear,
But never guessed until to-night
The depths of meaning and the might
Of what you rendered here.

"'The Master has been much to me;
But more than ever now I see
That there none is above him.
You have been his interpreter:
To you it has been given to stir
The souls of all who love him!'

"Then swift up-flashed a memory,
A long-forgotten day;
A memory of tears once shed,
Of aching hand and puzzled head,
And of the father's word that said,
'*Trust and obey.*'

"The lesson learnt in patience then
Was lit by love and duty;
The toiling time was quickly past,
The trusting time had fleeted fast,
And Alice understood at last
Its mysteries of beauty.

"O glad, perpetual harvest-time
After the sowing days!
For all her life rich joy of sound,
And deep delight to loved ones round,
And to the Master—praise!

"Ye read her story.
Take home the lesson with a spirit-smile;
Darkness and mystery a little while,
Then—light and glory,
And ministry 'mid saint and seraph band,
And service of high praise in the Eternal Land!"

INDEX OF TEXTS ON THE WILL OF GOD UNDER THEIR SEVERAL HEADS.

I.

THE WILL OF GOD.

Lam. iii. 33.
Dan. iv. 35.
Matt. xviii. 14.
Luke ii. 14.
John i. 13.
,, vi. 39.
,, ,, 40.
Rom. ix. 15.
Acts xviii. 21.
Rom. xix. 11.
1 Cor. xii. 11.
Gal. i. 4.
Eph. i. 5, 9, 11.
1 Thess. iv. 3.
Heb. ii. 4.
,, x. 10.
Jas. i. 18.
2 Pet. iii. 9.

II.

IN CONNECTION WITH CHRIST.

Ps. xl. 8.
Matt. vi. 10.
,, vii. 21.
,, viii. 3.
,, xxvi. 39.
,, ,, 42.
Mark iii. 35.
,, xiv. 36.
Luke xxii. 42.
John iv. 34.
,, v. 21.
,, ,, 30.
,, vi. 38.
,, ,, 39, 40.
,, vii. 17.
,, xvii. 24.

III.

IN CONNECTION WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Rom. viii. 26, 27.
1 John v. 14, 15.

IV.

MADE KNOWN TO MAN, ETC.

1 Chron. xxviii. 9.
Ezra vii. 18.
Ps. cx. 3.
,, cxliii. 10.
Prov. xxi. 1.
Isa. i. 19.
Matt. vii. 21.
Mark iii. 35.
John vii. 17.
,, ix. 31.
Acts ix. 6.
,, xiii. 22.
1 Cor. i. 1.
2 Cor. viii. 3, 5, 12.
Eph. i. 9.
,, v. 17.
,, vi. 6, 7.
Phil. ii. 13.
Col. i. 9.
,, iv. 12.
1 Thess. v. 18.
Heb. xiii. 21.
Jas. iv. 15.
1 Pet. ii. 15.

MADE KNOWN TO MAN. (*Continued.*)

Acts xiii. 36. 1 Pet. iv. 2, 29.
,, xxii. 14. 1 John ii. 17.
Rom. xii. 2. ,, v. 14.
,, xv. 32. ,, ,, 15.
Rev. xxii. 17.

V.

WILL OF UNREGENERATE MAN.

Matt. xxvii. 17. John v. 40.
,, ,, 21. Eph. ii. 2, 3.
Luke xxiii. 23, 24. 1 Pet. iv. 3.
2 Pet. iii. 5.

JUDGMENTS ON THOSE WHO DO NOT THE WILL.

Luke xii. 47.

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